THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

CHRISTIANITY has from the beginning possessed a doctrine of history. The clue to the Christian doctrine of history is supplied by the idea of the Kingdom of God. It is a Kingdom which is not of this world. It lies behind the varied panorama of this world. But it breaks in upon this world, manifesting itself to them that have eyes to see. On this account it involves a special reading of history, a sacred as distinguished from a secular reading.

Christian thinkers have become increasingly conscious of all this. They realize—to put a point to the general position—that the life of Christ offers itself both to sacred and to secular exposition. In their clear awareness of this they are less apprehensive than in a former day of the negative tendencies in the modern scientific investigation. At the same time they feel the great need of restating for to-day the terms of the theological evaluation. Accordingly, the Christian doctrine of history is becoming more and more recognized as, under this title, a cardinal doctrine of the Christian Faith.

In illustration we have pleasure in citing the scheme of Christian doctrine given in a recent volume by Dr. J. S. WHALE, President of Cheshunt College. The volume—*Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge University Press; 7s. 6d. net)—consists of eight lectures, in slightly expanded form, delivered in the University of Cambridge during the Michaelmas Term, 1940, to undergraduates of all Faculties. It does not pretend to be systematic or comprehensive. But we regard it as significant that it gives a distinct and assured place in the dogmatic structure to the Christian doctrine of history. Here is its eightfold list of chief doctrines in the order of treatment: Creation, The Fall, History, The Atonement, The Trinity and the Incarnation, The Church, The Word and the Sacraments, The Last Things.

Let us offer an account of the Lecture, the third in the series, which treats of History. Its full title is: 'The Kingdom of God: the Christian Doctrine of History.'

It is indicated at the outset that the Greek and the Hebrew thought very differently about history. The wise man, said the Stoic, is not concerned with time. Said the Hebrew prophet, God reveals Himself through the events of time. The Greek philosopher conceived of God as the static timeless Absolute; the Hebrew prophet spoke of Him as the living God, the world's Creator and Redeemer.

Thus the Bible is a history book. But it gives secular history in a framework of sacred history, 'which began in Paradise and will end in the New Jerusalem.' For Christian apostles and evangelists stand in the succession of the Hebrew prophets, viewing the world with them as the scene of God's creative and redemptive activity.

The Hebraic and Christian outlook on history raises a difficulty for thought. How can time be the vehicle of eternity? How can particular facts of history, to use Lessing's language, establish eternal truths? But unless the eternal be somehow revealed in history, unless there be some junction between God's eternal life and man's temporal life, God must remain for ever unknown. And it is the supreme paradox of the Christian religion that in a particular historical process, and more especially in a particular historical Person who is its climax, God has actually made Himself known.

But why just the history of Israel and its consummation in the events of the New Testament? Is not this particularity itself a stumbling-block to thought? There is a real difficulty here also. Is it not largely met, however, by the consideration that the Events which constituted the Christian revelation brought something new, not so much for the historian perhaps as for the believer? They created a new relationship between God and Man. Further, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is unique: there is no other revealer of God's redeeming love as remarkable as the Man, Christ Jesus.

Wherein does the uniqueness of the Christian gospel consist? It is in its announcement of that redeeming activity of God in history which is the forgiveness of sin. The crisis and climax to which the prophets of Israel had looked forward was now an actual and amazing fact; the Kingdom of God had come; God's grace in redemption was shed abroad in the world. And the decisive point of the Christian revelation is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Here is the key to the Christian doctrine of history.

'Belief in the Resurrection is not an appendage to the Christian faith; it is the Christian faith. The full diet of public worship on any Sunday, anywhere throughout Christendom, is the celebration of the Resurrection of the Redeemer. This is the only sufficient basis and guarantee of Christian faith and worship. It is not tacked on to the gospel story to make a happy ending, or to hide what, without it, would be the supreme tragedy of history; it is implicit in the story from the beginning. It is from the foundation of the world.'

We commend the whole volume as a fresh, vigorous, and vital statement of the chief tenets of Christianity on the lines of the newer conservatism (yet, while appreciative of Barth, not bowing the knee to him). We think the author would not regard it as a contradiction in terms if we were to describe his work as written from an essentially Catholic and Calvinistic standpoint by one of the Congregationalist persuasion.

The Undivided Mind, by Mr. E. B. CASTLE, M.A., Headmaster of Leighton Park School, Reading (Allen & Unwin; 2s. 6d. net), had the unusual distinction of being singled out, and strongly recommended recently, by 'Janus' in the 'Spectator's Note-book.' And it fully deserves this appreciation. It contains the 'Swarthmore Lecture' for 1941, a foundation which is designed primarily to expound and propagate the special message and mission of the Society of Friends. The lectures were begun in 1908, and many notable contributions have been made to the series since then.

Mr. CASTLE begins with the divided mind, and a good deal of the lecture is taken up with it. There are two kinds of people who display it. The first are the spiritually obtuse, those who did not see, but who ought to have seen, the moral and social implications of the religion they professed. If Jesus failed anywhere He failed with these; and He is still failing with them. They are a representative class, to which most of us belong, the class of the comfortable, the conforming, the respectable; 'statically good people,' mildly jealous of their rights but insensitive to their social duties; their brains effective in the smaller circles of business but their minds unreceptive to the call of the Great Society of men. This narrowness is due to divided thinking which fails to bridge the gap between personal religion and the social content of Christianity.

The other class who display the divided mind (in this case it is the divided *soul*) are the religiously unstable, those who have lost certainty. This also is a large class, who are conscious of a need for a religious outlook and are unable to achieve it. Some words of Jung, quoted by Mr. CASTLE, are worth recalling in this connexion. 'During the past thirty years, people from all civilized countries of the earth have consulted me. I have treated many hundreds of patients, the larger number being Protestants, a smaller Jews, and not more than five or six believing Catholics. Among my patients in the second half of life—that is to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook.'

This divided mind is seen in action in three ways. Naturally enough it is seen in the failure of democracy. After the last war our so-called democratic system revealed itself as a pagan organization super-imposed upon a nominally Christian people. The statesmen of that period were for the most part upright and honest. But they made mistakes because they, like us, lacked the Christian imagination to see the nature of their responsibilities. The roots of our present calamities lie deep in the traditions, self-interests, and mental habits that have lodged themselves in our unconscious. And in consequence there is division in men's inner allegiance, and division between their professed beliefs, and their expression in public life.

The divided mind shows itself also, sometimes crudely, in the contradictions that exist in the same person between two ideals of life. Mr. CASTLE gives some examples that are almost silly. But he quotes a more serious one from an article in the 'Times' on 'Sharing the Cross,' which almost equates Christ's cross and the soldier's sacrifice. 'Divided thinking alone can draw a parallel' between these. But the same thing is found everywhere in our nation.

There are two essentially different conceptions of life united into a single habit of mind in most educated people. We have come to accept this two-stranded ideal as natural and inevitable, the aristocratic chivalric ideal and the Christian ideal. The former has taught us to play the game, to be obedient, to endure, to be brave, to do and die, not to reason why—all noble things except the last. But these things are not enough to-day. We need more than a noble but limited ideal. We need an imaginative vision wider than one that is bounded by a school, a regiment, or a social class. We need something far bigger that will release men's minds for the constructive tasks before them.

A third direction in which the divided mind is seen at work is the religious society. The noblest attempt to create an undivided religious society was that of the Medieval Church. It attempted to impose the Christian law on all life and synthesize all human activities through the truth of the gospel. But the world within the Church proved too much for this attempt. And nothing like it has been seen since.

Protestantism was not strong enough to counter the political and social trends of the sixteenth century. Luther failed here. He was more interested in saving souls than in saving society. Calvinism did make an honest effort to apply Christian principles all round. But the growing industrial wave swept this and all other attempts at synthesis away. And the result was a separation of religion and business. The secular remained the secular, business unfortunately remained business, politics remained severely politics, and the religious society is still no more than an aspiration.

In England, therefore, when the machine age opened up vast opportunities for the acquisition of wealth there was no resistant body of Christian teaching capable of stemming the gold rush, or of examining the new economic doctrines that fortified the rich in the enjoyment of their possessions and 'justified' the increasing poverty of the poor. 'The abdication of the Christian churches of one whole sphere of life, that of social and political

conduct,' says R. H. Tawney, 'as the sphere of the powers of this world, and of them alone, is one of the capital revolutions through which the human spirit has passed.' What might have happened in this country if the Church of Christ had regarded the righteous ordering of society as a legitimate sphere of religious activity?

That is the divided mind. And it must be obvious what the undivided mind is. It is one that is daily exposed to the unifying power of the inner Light, which is Christ, gaining certainty from discipline and experience, seeing clearly the truth as it is in Jesus and seeing life whole. Class and privilege will be separated out from our thinking as irrelevant categories of thought. Men and women will become ends in themselves instead of means to our purposes. Worldly possessions will not be allowed to influence our judgments. The Divine Intelligence will demand that we spend our gifts in the building of a just society.

It is clear, then, that the undivided mind will be the point of a real, vital, Christian faith, not a conventional faith but one that is nurtured on the spirit of Christ. But how will this Christian faith achieve its purpose in the creation of a just society? Mr. CASTLE is not blind to the tremendous forces that will oppose any effort to humanize our social system. He realizes the critical nature of the challenge the war is issuing to democracy, and he is concerned with the part the Church must play in planning the better world.

He does not suggest that the Church should do the planning. But he gives to the Church a vital function in this planning which may be illustrated by a comparison of his own. When I buy a pair of shoes I know the peculiar style of fitting necessary for my comfort and I rightly assume a capacity in the shoemaker to supply my requirements. If he says, 'It can't be done,' I shall find another more skilled craftsman who says it can. The political and economic planning in detail will remain largely in the hands of those 'in the trade,' but it is the duty of the community of people who call themselves Christians to declare what the Christian gospel requires, and to demand from the planners without fear and with unwearying persistence that men shall not be treated as instruments but as ends.

War always presents a problem to the Christian conscience. The contrast between the brutality of war and the gentleness of Christ is so stark that it could not fail to strike every thoughtful mind, and it has seemed to many to be difficult, if not impossible, to justify the act of engaging in war at the bar of Christian conscience.

Never more so than now, when war with an incalculable increase in its devilish power and horror has come smashing down upon the quivering nerves of a society which is unusually sensitive to pain. The first natural impulse of every Christian, indeed of every decent, mind is to turn away from it with loathing and utterly to abjure it. Yet it has to be faced like every other grim fact in this evil world, and some positive line of conduct must be followed in regard to it.

Discussions of the problem are, of course, rife in these war days and differences of view among Christian teachers are notorious. It would not, however, be going beyond the truth to say that, as in previous times, so to-day the great majority of leading Christian thinkers are satisfied in their own mind and conscience that certain dire occasions may arise in which it becomes a Christian duty to engage in war, and that the opinion of those who deny this, and simply shut their eyes to the consequences, while highly creditable to their heart, is a mistaken opinion which offers no adequate solution to the problem.

A little book, *War Aims Unlimited*, by Mr. A. A. MILNE (Methuen; 1s. net), deals with certain aspects of the problem in a vivid and arresting way, and calls for some notice and criticism. The writer, as is well known, commands an interesting and delightful style and has charmed the children, old and young, by his 'Christopher Robin' books. He wears the preacher's mantle with ease and gives his views with admirable force and directness.

His book contains four topics of discussion, but three of them do not so directly concern us here. In the first of the three he passes criticisms on the Communist People's Convention which made some stir recently, and has little difficulty in showing the absurdities and contradictions embodied in its speeches and programme. In the second chapter he argues against the demand that the Allies should here and now declare their policy for a New Europe. He thinks it unnecessary. 'If a modern Herod were to announce a New Order in Europe under which all children up to six years old were to be crucified, there would be no need to elaborate some delightful counter-attraction for mothers.' It might also, he thinks, hamper the actual settlement at the end of the war, just as the peacemakers at Versailles had their hands tied by promises given beforehand to this country and to that. In a final chapter he expresses doubts as to the feasibility of Federation. 'I hope that I may live to see some sort of federation of a democratic world; but to welcome "Union Now"—that is, at the instant of signing the peace—needs more detachment than the hour will bring. It is true (and there is no pacifist who has not said it again and again) that an exaggerated nationalism has been the curse of the world. It is, however, doubtful if the moment of release from captivity of the occupied countries will be the moment for pointing this out.'

The remaining chapter, on which we would make a brief comment, is entitled 'War Aim of a Pacifist.' The writer declares himself a convinced pacifist. 'By a Pacifist I mean one who holds that the use of war as an instrument of policy is wrong. My Pacifist reasons for wishing to fight this war were two: one, that I wanted to end all war, and I knew that the complete destruction of Hitler was a necessary preliminary to the ending of all war; two, that the state in which Europe had been living for the previous six years was not a state of peace, but a state of war, so that the destruction of Hitler was a necessary preliminary to the ending of that particular war.'

Having reached this conclusion he regards the prosecution of the war as a supreme and absolute duty to which all other interests must be sacrificed and all other duties made subordinate. Obviously, of course, there must be an unlimited sacrifice of material goods. But there are also spiritual sacrifices to be made. Freedom must be restricted and chivalry must be renounced. 'War is not a game, it is an abomination. To deck it out with little tricks of chivalry only makes it more horrible, as an execution would be more horrible if we painted the scaffold bright engaging colours and had a swing band in attendance.'

He pours scorn upon 'the ridiculous prohibition of certain forms of war.' 'There was an outcry during the Battle of Britain at the barbarity of German airmen who tried to shoot British airmen as they came down from wrecked machines by parachute. Apparently it is gentlemanly to shoot your enemy in his aeroplane, and gentlemanly to bomb him in his aerodrome, but not gentlemanly to kill him on his way from one to the other. . . . There is no logic in the world which makes sense of the proposition that a country's need gives its nationals the right to kill the nationals of another country by high explosive, but not the right to kill them by gas.' Fortunately man does not live by logic alone, and the instinct to spare the fallen foe, to cease from attack as soon as he is disabled, and to shrink from inflicting hideous forms of suffering may be termed 'sentimental chivalry,' but it comes from a noble impulse of the heart. It is true that the fallen foe who is spared may live to fight another day, but at the moment he is defenceless, he has ceased to resist, and humanity requires that we cease from the attack.

It comes to this, then, according to Mr. A. A. Milne, that war being an abomination should be fought by every abominable means. The brutal Nazi way is the only right way. 'My war aim, therefore, is Victory: victory by any and every means: victory regardless of any other consideration whatever. It is a complete interregnum, when all rules of conduct, all the implications of ordinary civilized life, are suspended. Chivalry and a nice feeling for the humanities control our actions as little in war as in the organization of a Rat Week or

the cleaning of a sewer. In accepting war mankind has put aside the Ten Commandments.'

To this frightful doctrine the Christian conscience must enter an emphatic protest. If this is war, then no Christian could touch it or look at it for a moment. If to engage in war means the renunciation of chivalry and the abrogation of Christ's great law of love, then it may confidently be said that there are thousands now fighting for their country who would rather die a hundred deaths than surrender themselves to such moral infamy.

For what does this doctrine imply? It implies that in war you have a region of human activity which is wholly beyond the sphere of God's moral government. To enter upon this region is to shake oneself free from the law of Christ. This is what no Christian could do without making himself an apostate. There may be blind and bigoted pacifists who think that this is what actually happens when a man takes up arms even in a righteous cause, but the Christian soldier has something to say in his own defence.

What is his defence? Briefly it is this, that force is morally neutral and that it is possible to use force at the impulse of love. It is possible to love your enemies in the Christian sense of the command even while fighting against them and resisting them to the death. Socrates had the moral insight to say that the worst thing that could happen to a tyrant was to suffer him to go on his evil way unchecked, because he was going headlong to ruin. Surely it is possible to believe, and indeed obvious, that the German nation must be resisted in its mad career if it is not to go to utter ruin. Running its present course unchecked it might gain the whole world and lose its own soul. And surely it is also plain that Christian love for all mankind lays upon us the duty of resisting the onrush of this devilish power.

The Christian soldier, therefore, has no call to apologize for his position but may fight with a good conscience, striving by God's grace, even in war, to uphold the highest standards of love and chivalry. He will resist the enemy so long as resistance is necessary, but as soon as opposition ceases and the enemy is rendered powerless through wounds or surrender or any like cause he will treat him with kindness in a spirit of love.

It is vital to the future of mankind to honour this ideal, however hard it may be to practise it in time of war. Once let this ideal be lost sight of and the Ten Commandments be put aside in time of war, and the downward road is opened to fathomless depths of brutality and villainy. Under any circumstances war has a brutalizing influence, but if brutality is to be exalted as the standard in war what hope is there that men will return to a higher standard in time of peace? The war must be won, but we must also win the peace. No enemy is finally vanquished till he is changed into a friend. For this the sword is of no avail. Only love can cast out hate, only justice, chivalry, and kindness can pave the way for the brotherhood of all nations.

Spiritual Problems and the War.

XI. Responsibilities of Christian Faith.

By the Reverend J. G. Riddell, M.A., Professor of Systematic Theology, University of Glasgow.

Confronted by the events of our time and realizing more and more the immensity of the spiritual problems which they raise, we find ourselves asking in our bewilderment why a generation like ours should have the responsibility of meeting such far-reaching issues. Surely a more heroic age, with men of greater wisdom, faith, and courage than we can claim, were needed to cope with happenings like these. Why should weak and foolish folk, such as we know ourselves to be, have been called to witness to the Christian gospel and to maintain the cause of Christ during the years between two great wars, in face of the loosening hold of Christianity upon our Western civilization, the multiplying of problems of every sort and the growing menace of dark and evil things which has broken upon the world in the calamities of to-day? This responsibility is too exacting for us, we say, and from it we shrink with a hesitation which is not altogether unworthy, since it reflects our sense of inadequacy for a task so great.

However sincere such protestations may be, the fact remains that, in the Providence of God, we are summoned to face responsibilities which are serious indeed. Mordecai's reply to the message of Esther, 'Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?' (Est 4^{14}), might have been an answer to our own questionings. Here is at once a unique opportunity and an exacting task which we dare not evade even if we could. It is no small privilege to be a Christian in these days of great possibilities, and many who lived in more tranquil times might well have envied us the chance of serving Christ's Church in such a momentous hour. Our sense of unworthiness, indeed, is itself an indication of the crucial issues that are involved. A declaration made by one of the Churches in 1918 is valid for ourselves. 'An outstanding result of the War has been that the Church to-day is being challenged by the world to explain its nature, clarify its message, and make good its claim.' The assertion that Christianity not only holds the secret of the true way of life for man and nations, but is able to rightly relate the events of the world's history to the will of God, must be vindicated, and the redeeming love made known in Jesus Christ declared anew. Not for many centuries—not, perhaps, since the first century—have Christians been faced by so demanding a situation or had such grave responsibilities laid upon them as they must undertake to-day.

None of us can ignore the fact that responsibility for the present catastrophe does not belong exclusively to any one nation or to any one trend of opinion or course of action. Outside Christianity as well as within the Churches there is a widespread awareness of failure and a sense of shame. Yet the Christian should not only be more sensitive than others to the menace of evil and more alive to the seriousness of the whole human situation, but should be more deeply penitent. We are apt, indeed, in time of calamity, to forget the amazing faithfulness of Christians in every land and the splendid courage and self-sacrifice of believing men and women in every sphere of life. We must not minimize the extent to which, in spite of all divisions of nationality and race, the world-wide power of the gospel has been displayed in our own day. It is well to remember that even the imperfect witness which has been borne to the Christian message and to the declared will of God, had it been heeded in the counsels of the nations, might have been more influential than we dare to dream. None the less, there is need for confession and penitence on the part of the Christian individual and community alike. The secret of the insight and the power by which alone men are fitted for the fullness of life which is God's purpose for them has been ours, but too often we have failed to communicate it to others and to the world in its hour of need. The gospel for which so much is claimed has been inadequately presented by a divided Church, and has often been propagated with but meagre enthusiasm both at home and overseas. Our first responsibility is for self-examination and repentance in the light of God's demands and the greatness of His promises. Yet penitence alone is not enough. Unto whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much, and from our awareness that God, in spite of past failures and present shortcomings, still calls us in

pardoning love to use our new opportunities should come a fresh consecration and devotion in meeting the further responsibilities of to-day.

These responsibilities come to us very evidently from our Christian belief itself. A childlike faith, in Keble's phrase, which

> Believes, because it loves, aright—
> Shall see things greater, things divine.

The Christian is under an obligation, which others do not share, to set events in the perspective of his deep convictions and thus avoid both a superficial judgment of them and the perplexities which such a judgment brings. Thus it is part of our faith that behind the grim events of these days and the calamities which have befallen mankind, there is not merely a war between nations but the age-long spiritual conflict between good and evil, truth and falsehood, light and darkness. We are familiar with the change from a certain complacency to a strenuous endeavour in our national outlook brought about by the awakening of our people to the seriousness of the issues confronting them. May it not be that in the events of our time God is impressing upon us anew our responsibility in that greater conflict which is not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world? (Eph 6^{11}). Here is a warfare in which all are involved, where there can be no neutrality and no appeasement, in which none can hope to win through without sacrifice and pain, but which is ever glorious, since Christ is our great protagonist and His triumph at Calvary makes the victory of His cause sure beyond all doubt.

There is laid upon us, likewise, the responsibility of facing the stark facts of human wickedness and its consequences, not merely in disappointment and grief and deep anger, but with the conviction that even in face of evil in such flagrant forms the Christian gospel is not helpless and cannot remain silent. If men have been tempted in the past to feel that they need no salvation and to forget the seriousness of their sin, surely their helplessness is set clear before their eyes to-day. The utter failure of human wisdom and its best-laid plans to avert disaster or open ways of escape from the madness of civilization's self-destruction is plain for all to see. Yet the Christian knows that it was to a world like this, and to those thus capable of disregarding His will for them, that God came in Jesus Christ. At Calvary He laid bare once and for all the terribleness of their sin, defeating its power and bringing to them hope of forgiveness and reconciliation with Himself. The Christian is sure, therefore, that God's care for the world has not ceased and that the love which came down at Bethlehem, endured the Cross and triumphed over its shame, still watches over the fulfilment of its purpose for humanity. Even in the depths of their iniquity men are not forsaken by God, nor does the Holy Spirit cease to come to them in all His plenitude of grace. Here, again, confronting evil on a tremendous scale, we have the responsibility of maintaining our confidence unshaken and our trust in the love of God and in His mighty power undismayed.

So it is, also, with the suffering and sorrow which the most innocent must endure and which present a problem bewildering to many minds. The story of precious things threatened and destroyed, of homes broken up and loved ones separated from one another, is sadly familiar to us all. The anguish of desolation and the poignancy of bereavement lead too often to dull resignation or embitterment of spirit. Yet it is part of the Christian's responsibility to meet such tragedies in the strength of his faith. We, who know that death is not the worst that can befall us, know too that the resurrection gospel is the one source of comfort and confidence when loved ones are taken from us. We, who have seen the way of suffering made glorious by Christ's treading of it even unto the Cross, know that God still comes near to us in our grief and agony, to take the burden of it upon Himself and to give us strength and courage to endure. It is not for the Christian to claim freedom from suffering or immunity from sorrow, but it is his responsibility to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand, sure that God's promised comfort and encouragement will not fail. 'He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me' (He $13^{5.\ 6}$).

A further element in our Christian believing of great importance for the events of to-day is the conviction that each of us has a responsibility in the sight of God alike as an individual, as a citizen, and as a member of the Christian Church, which is inescapably his own. Part of the seriousness of the calamity which has befallen the world is the wide spread of a deliberate policy by which the individual is disregarded and his interests sacrificed to those of the nation or the race. Even in our own land the immensity of the issues involved in the world situation, and the feeling that we are carried away as with a flood by the course of events which we can

neither influence nor control, is apt to blunt our sense of personal responsibility. We accept sub-Christian standards more easily than in times of peace, satisfying ourselves that in the end the responsibility is not ours. Can our ways of life, our words, and our deeds really matter, since we are nameless folk, at the mercy of forces too great for us? When all is uncertain and precarious does it greatly signify whether or not we maintain our principles in new surroundings, amid strange temptations, faced by unfamiliar tasks? The answer of the gospel is surely clear. If the value of each soul to God is to be measured by the breadth and length and depth and height of His love made known at Calvary, then no limit can be set to the importance of each of us in His sight. If there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth we cannot magnify too much His concern with the ways of life which we pursue. If the very hairs of our head are all numbered, and not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Father, then those whom men mass together and crush in their inhumanity are marked out by Him, each one apart. The gospel, indeed, gives back to us the privilege of which so many seemed well-nigh deprived—of living under a great responsibility, of being accountable to God for every thought and word and action, and of being of untold value in His sight.

For the future, also, Christian faith has its great responsibilities. The Christian is well aware that a better world will not be achieved by human effort alone, but only by the obedience of men and nations to the declared will of God. As a recent pronouncement puts it, 'If we are to hope for a world order which satisfies the longing of mankind we must be sure of our starting-point. This can be no other than God made known in Christ' (*Towards a Christian Britain*). None the less, such a better order will not come without thought and prayer, courage and self-sacrifice on the part of Christians everywhere. There is an urgent need, increasingly recognized, for re-dedication to this high task, and a demand that the Churches seriously face the issues of the present situation both for their own life and work and for the true well-being of the communities in which they are set. The message of Mordecai, quoted above, has a further implication. We may, indeed, be come to the kingdom for such a time as this and have the responsibility of meeting its demands in the strength which God supplies. In the end, however, it is His work and not ours. Failure on our part, will not frustrate His purpose any more than Esther's holding her peace could prevent enlargement and deliverance arising to the Jews from another place.

There is a serious warning in words like these which we do well to take to heart. None the less there is untold encouragement in the conviction that God's purpose cannot fail. This, that we see around us, is not the outcome of His will for the world, yet the Lord still sitteth King above the flood. As the ages pass, whether in the calmness of a quiet meandering stream or in the swirling rush of a torrent in spate, He is still King for ever, controlling the outcome of events and restoring that which has been destroyed. John Buchan has told in his autobiography how, during the last war, he was reassured that the innocencies of the old life remained by the quiet persistence of essential things in the Cotswolds, and in the Tweedside hills where 'Samothrace and Murmansk and Palestine would be absorbed, as Otterburn and Flodden had been, into the ageless world of pastoral' (*Memory Hold-the-Door*, 168). So God's purpose shall endure after the present turmoil has died away, and men who confide in Him need not fear, but may freely give themselves to His service and that of humanity for His sake. Like the Psalmist, their heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. They shall not be afraid of evil tidings for they have the good news of the gospel which must endure long after the most cunning propaganda, the most plausible rumours, the most alarming facts have faded into the past. They have seen in vision 'the life of man, the life of God shine clear,' and know that the race will yet 'fulfil the spiral of its steep ascent, predestined by His will.'

Even in the darkest hour the Christian must ever be looking forward, preparing for that which shall be, ready to spend and be spent in the service of men for the sake of Christ, sharing with them their sorrow and suffering, resolved that a better day can and shall be brought to pass, confident that God, who knows all that men in their foolishness must endure, will not fail to respond to their wistful, longing faith. Thus the Christian in every age has his reply to those who ridicule his hopes and belittle his efforts, who seek to crush his life and claim that his cause is doomed. His ultimate hope and confidence, moreover, reach out into the future, and beyond the frontiers of the earth, in no foolish spirit of otherworldliness, but with the sincere conviction that all his endeavour and achievement in the transient order here is to be interpreted in the light of that enduring order which shall be hereafter. No teaching save that of Christian faith lays upon us the responsibility of being

seekers after a city that hath foundations, or gives us the comfort that this quest brings. 'The writers of the Bible,' wrote Professor John E. McFadyen, 'were haunted by the insecurities of life. . . . But they lifted up their hearts in the thought of the security of the city of God.' Those who have seen man's work of destruction in their cities and their homes know too well that 'sooner or later every fabric raised by earthly hands will totter, But—

> *They stand,* those halls of Zion,
> All jubilant with song!' [1]

Christians have not merely the responsibility that comes with belief in life after death, or a refuge when things around them are shattered and broken and they feel lonely and afraid. They must live here in this world, in St. Paul's phrase, not as the enemies of the Cross of Christ, but as those whose conversation is in heaven from whence they look for the Saviour. They are in the age-long contest as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, in the King's own army which none can overthrow. 'It is upon this field of an indecisive conflict between the recalcitrant will of man and the true divine meaning of man himself and his world that sacred history supervenes, telling how the victory is won through a dying to the world and a resurrection in power' (C. H. Dodd, *History and the Gospel,* 169). The greatest responsibility of the Christian is to live assured that the victory of Christ's cause and the consummation of God's purpose are the ultimate end to which all things are being brought. Faced by the spiritual problems of the war, he has this great source of courage, steadfastness, and hope. In Aulén's words, let us 'hear again the old realistic message of the conflict of God with the dark, hostile forces of evil, and His victory over them by the Divine self-sacrifice . . . hear again the note of triumph' (*Christus Victor,* 176).

The supremacy of Christ is the goal of all the ages, made certain by the victory of the Cross and of the empty tomb. An old Scots' poet wrote in quaint phrase—

> Done is a battle on the dragon black,
> Our campion Christ confoundit has his force;
> The yettis of hell are broken with a crack,
> The sign triumphal raisit is of the cross . . .
> Surrexit Dominus de sepulchro.

A modern writer pictures the soul facing the demands of life and the uncertainties which lie ahead triumphantly trusting in God,

> Who not in peace alone hath bid thee go,
> But through gross darkness, and a 'wildering woe . . .
> Since thou hast guessed that on thy side have striven
> A host unknown—a hierarchy of heaven.

In our time of trial we may make our own St. Paul's great declaration of confidence and certainty in the midst of adversity, 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us' (Ro 8^{37}). The words of the prophet long ago, upon whom came the spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation, are still true of our spiritual conflict. 'Thus saith the Lord . . . Be not afraid nor dismayed . . . for the battle is not yours, but God's' (2 Ch 20^{15}). The battle is His, and the victory. In Christ He makes His triumph ours, and has promised that those who are thus victorious over the powers of evil shall stand at the last on the sea of glass mingled with fire and sing the triumph song of Moses and of the Lamb, saying, 'Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints' (Rev $15^{2.3}$).

[1] *The City with Foundations,* 8.

Literature.

JUDAISM IN THE GREEK PERIOD.

None has a better right than Dr. W. O. E. Oesterley to publish a book on *The Jews and Judaism during the Greek Period* (S.P.C.K.; 10s. 6d. net). For many years he has been recognized as an authority on the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic literature, and therein lie our sources of information, although, as Dr. Oesterley rightly emphasizes, the Old Testament itself must not be neglected. For not only does some part of our Old Testament itself belong to the Greek period, but later writings had constantly in view what the Old Testament seemed to the authors to teach.

By the Greek period is meant the centuries from the conquest of the Orient by Alexander the Great to the opening of the Christian Era.

The book begins with succinct summaries of the

general history of the Middle East and the varying fortunes of the Jewish people during the period. Summaries of history are apt to be dry reading, but Dr. Oesterley's masterly survey is not dry. It is indeed compact, but the rush of events is set before us in vivid manner. Having thus set the scene the author proceeds to deal with his real subject—the development of Jewish religious belief and practice. He gives a careful chronological account of the various Apocryphal and Apocalyptic works that need consideration. A very valuable feature is his way of giving not mere references to but citations from the books to illustrate whatever point is under consideration.

Every one knows that between the Old Testament and the New Testament a great development of belief took place. What led to that and from what source were the new tenets derived? On the latter point Dr. Oesterley shows convincingly that very markedly in such topics as eschatology and demonology the ultimate source was Persia. From the time of Alexander there was an increasing infiltration of Persian thought. To Dr. Oesterley's mind this means only that God spoke to all nations, though Israel excelled in capacity to receive His revelation, and the 'Apocalyptists' were 'inspired' of God to take and adapt for the service of true religion whatever gleams of truth other peoples might possess. This, he reminds us, was no unprecedented thing in Israel. In the Old Testament we find that Babylonian and probably to some extent Egyptian influences may be clearly traced.

Our author is not concerned in this volume with economic or social features of Jewish history. He limits himself strictly to the religious and even there deals only with what he regards as most important. So we have the doctrines of Monotheism, the Kingdom of Heaven, the Messiah, Sin and Redemption, Immortality, and in a later section Angelology and Demonology. In every case we have the Old Testament foundation, later development, and finally a brief account of the New Testament position. Obviously in a book of some three hundred pages only part of which is devoted to these great topics—one of them Dr. Oesterley describes as 'stupendous'—the treatment must be brief. Yet it is never 'scrappy.' It is full of suggestiveness and wise guidance. Only once does one feel that Dr. Oesterley's view arouses surprise, that is in his dogmatic statement 'it may be definitely stated that He (Jesus) rejected what the Apocalyptists taught,' namely, that Messiah was to be final Judge (p. 161 f.). In this passage Dr. Oesterley will not command universal assent.

Particularly good are the chapters dealing with Worship, and with Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. As to what precisely the name 'Pharisee' meant there is considerable doubt. Usually it has been explained as 'separatist'; the difficulty is to know from whom or to what extent the Pharisee was 'separate.' Dr. Oesterley reminds us that the Hebrew *p-r-sh* may also mean 'interpret,' and the Pharisees certainly were 'expounders' of the law. He suggests that if we prefer the meaning 'separate,' we may think of the Sadducees contemptuously regarding as 'separatists' those who holding by the oral as well as the written law, formed themselves into a body of teachers in opposition to, and rivalry with, the official priestly teachers.

The book will prove helpful and illuminating. It is not designed, we are told, for the 'expert,' but the experts on this subject are few, and a great many students, ministers, and others will welcome an authoritative, scholarly, and very readable book on a subject of profound interest and importance.

W. D. Niven.

CHINESE SAGES AND THE GOLDEN RULE.

There has been much discussion round and about the Golden Rule—some finding in it one of the most manifestly original parts of Christ's teaching, while others, confidently producing not a few parallels from other thinkers, tend to reduce it to a moral platitude, common to many of the greater ethnical teachers.

Certainly in the Gospels it is stated positively; whereas most of the kindred sayings put it only negatively. And that is characteristic of the Master's mind. For we are surely past, not only such odd judgments as that of Hirsch 'that the negative form of the Golden Rule marks if anything a higher outlook than the positive statement in which it is cast in Matthew,' but the absurdity of J. S. Mill's pronouncement, with its thumping emphasis of iteration, that the Christian ethic is negative rather than positive, passive rather than active, full of 'Thou shalt not' rather than of 'Thou shalt' and so on—all which two hours of study of the Testament would have shown to be the exact antithesis of the staring facts. The call of Christ is not merely to keep out of evil, but to fling oneself away in positive and eager service of God and man; and not to do this—however free from actual wrongdoing—is to fail and be condemned. Said Wordsworth once—what a great man effects for the world is this—he does something that was never done before, but which, once done, becomes a standard for the rest of us, below

which we can't rest content. And the New Testament sets us down before the central cross on Calvary, and claims—that has been done with a human life; and, if you have any spiritual sensitiveness in you, that has become for you the standard; and, in face of it, what formerly sufficed as righteousness has become obsolete and out-of-date.

Has any one ever taught the Golden Rule in Jesus' fullness? Among the most outstanding claimants for this honour are the Chinese master-minds—Confucius, Lao-tzŭ and Mo-tzŭ. And here comes a study, only thirty-four pages long, but full and authoritative, reprinted from the Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, *The Chinese Sages and the Golden Rule*, by Professor H. H. Rowley, D.D., B.Litt., of the University College of North Wales (Manchester University Press; 1s. 6d. net). People are apt to reckon Lao-tzŭ higher than Confucius in this matter, on the basis of two or three of his most famous sayings, such as, 'Recompense injury with kindness,' and 'To those who are good (to me) I am good; to those who are not good (to me) I also am good.' But, as Rowley emphasizes, one must consider such texts against the background of the whole body of the teaching; and especially of the motive enjoined. And the whole point of Taoism is a proud aristocratic aloofness, a self-centred indifference to the world around one, and its impinging on oneself. Moreover, one of the real difficulties in this whole region is to be sure that the same word, used in different religions, has the same content. In Buddhism, for example, in such practices as the Brahmaviharas, and in such striking teachings as the Sutta of the Saw, tremendous heights of unselfish love seem to be plainly taught and reached. Yet such an authority as Mrs. Rhys Davids is emphatic that Mettā is not the same as Christian love, but is 'a much more temperate relationship'; is, indeed, a self-centred cleansing of one's own soul, with one's own interests always in view, but not the loving warding of one's fellow-men for their own sakes which Christ enjoins. And so here. In Taoism the words sound fully Christian, but the motive is self-centred, and not really love.

As to Confucius, undoubtedly he expressly repudiates meeting injury with kindness. 'With what then,' he asked, 'would you recompense kindness?' Yet, if he believed that justice is a fundamental virtue, he had a glorious conception of how men should deal with one another, limited no doubt by his insistence on the five relationships. Yet, asked by a bewildered soul, lost in the tangle of laws and duties and the like, for one simple easily remembered word as an unfailing guide in every situation, 'Is not Reciprocity such a word?' he asked. 'Do not do to others what you would not have others do to you.' Professor Rowley is quite sure that Confucius out-tops Lao-tzŭ in these high matters. And one agrees with him.

But the really serious claimant is Mo-tzŭ, too long overlooked and neglected, partly because of Mencius' attack on him, in which he brackets him with the unspeakable Yang-chu. And yet to Mo-tzŭ the one hope for the world (this is his fundamental thesis) is a mutual love, which overleaps the five relationships, and runs out to all. Hence the attack of Mencius. Short of that, so argues Mo-tzŭ, your efforts to bring in a tranquil righteous world must be at best imperfect, largely futile.

For a study—wise and scholarly—of the relations of those three Chinese masters, and an acute sifting of the evidence regarding their religious outlooks, and, in especial, for an argument that, unlike Jesus Christ, they fail to give the motive power required, one must refer the reader to Professor Rowley's vital little book. A. J. Gossip.

A PLEA FOR IDEATIONAL CLARITY.

In her recent volume, *Ideals and Illusions* (Watts & Co.; 8s. 6d. net), Professor L. Susan Stebbing has given us in the language of popular exposition an interesting critical account of ethical and political questions confronting us to-day. Much of what she says would be helpful to the Christian preacher, who spends a great part of his mental life in that 'climate of thought' (the phrase is one that Miss Stebbing obviously finds it hard to resist using, when a chance of using it comes!) to which we are here introduced. This we say despite the fact that, in Miss Stebbing's opinion, 'spiritual value does not depend upon God or upon the continuance of human beings after the death of the body.' For, after all, most modern Christian preachers would agree with her that 'here and now we know that hatred, cruelty, intolerance, and indifference to human misery are evil; that love, kindliness, tolerance, forgiveness and truth are good, so unquestionably good that we do not need God or heaven to assure us of their worth.' Only they would go further and say that the love of God and the hope of immortality have been mighty incentives to the good life; and if these are taken away, there appears to be nothing to put in their place.

Miss Stebbing's central aim is to plead for definiteness and concreteness in thought and speech, in which there is too much contemporary 'muddle.' She would have no difficulty in all conscience in

finding instances for her critical pillory, but she is content to select a few. Among her culprits are Professor E. H. Carr, Dr. A. D. Lindsay, Miss Rosalind Murray, Canon Peter Green, and Mr. Gerald Heard. With engaging frankness she herself admits to 'muddle'; but it is no very serious admission, considering that it was on the problem of human freedom and responsibility!

Among the subjects she discusses are the significance of ideals, the pursuit of happiness, the evil of suffering, the hope of a better world, the inherent moral turpitude of the ideals of Fascism and National Socialism, and the true implications of the ideal of Democracy. The volume closes on a note of hope, envisaging 'a world where men can be free and happy because they are not afraid of the truth, however uncomforting, and have learnt that love casts out fear and brings peace.'

W. Fulton.

THE RACE TRAGEDY IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The third of the eight principles which have been announced by the American President and the British Prime Minister as aims which they have before them for the world recognizes the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live. A few days after these principles were announced, Mr. Attlee, the deputy Prime Minister, assured a deputation of African students that they would apply to all peoples, whatever their race or colour. An important book by Professor R. F. Alfred Hoernlé of the University of the Witwatersrand—*South African Native Policy and the Liberal Spirit* (published by the Livingstone Press on behalf of the Phelps-Stokes Fund of the University of Cape Town; 7s. 6d. net)—brings vividly before us once more the tragic failure up to the present time of the white people of South Africa to carry out this principle in the case of the native peoples among whom they live as well as the difficulties that will have to be overcome if it is ever to be carried into effect.

Professor Hoernlé is a distinguished scholar, head of the Department of Philosophy in his University, but he is not here speculating in the region of abstract thought. He writes as a South African facing a problem that is before him and his fellow-countrymen every day, the problem of liberty in a multi-racial community. He looks frankly at the harsh and bitter facts of a land in which the white minority believe that unless they maintain themselves as the dominant caste (the Herrenvolk) in the racial structure there is no future for them. It is an indication of the position that Professor Hoernlé holds in South Africa that these lectures with their honest presentation of the whole baffling situation were delivered not only in Cape Town but to the University of Stellenbosch—in Afrikaans—to 'an Afrikaans-speaking academic audience.' He tells us that 'white liberals are a small and, by all indications, dwindling minority group in South African public life.' If this problem is ever to be solved, it can only be if there is a nucleus of such men with the ability, courage, and conviction that he so evidently possesses and who will not be daunted or lose heart.

'The liberal spirit,' he says, 'seeks the realization of liberty in the lives of all human beings, but, in doing so, is ready to recognize and respect the values embodied in differences of race and culture, and aims at giving each a place in the sun of liberty.' Professor Hoernlé's purpose is to discover whether in the world of to-day and in the presence of the racial problem there is any hope for this 'liberal spirit.' First he sets out the facts in South Africa, a land which claims to be a democracy but always understands 'the people of South Africa' as referring exclusively to the white population and reckons the non-European four-fifths as 'human livestock.' In a wider world than South Africa the word race is 'a cue-word' for a set of 'dynamic' beliefs that express themselves in 'vigorous, aggressive, and even ruthless and destructive action.' In fact, one can see that from the point of view of humanity and its future the race problem in Africa is a centre of danger even more threatening than the conflict with German Nazism.

Professor Hoernlé, who fully recognizes the part that Christian Missions have played alongside of Liberal Humanitarianism in championing the cause of the non-European, believes that in South Africa at least liberalism has been so completely defeated that the word liberal is now merely a term of abuse, and that 'by and large the white world is not a Christian world.' South Africa is in his view a 'Heartbreak House' for men of liberal spirit and 'the multi-racial society of the Union is steadily developing towards an intensification of White domination in a racial caste-structure.'

Professor Hoernlé is well aware of the tremendous opposition, deeply rooted as it is in human covetousness and fear, that will have to be overcome if this problem is ever to be solved. The solution which he advocates and for which he sees a glimmer of hope is that of what he calls 'Total Separation.' This differs radically from the present policy of 'segregation.' It 'means literally a sundering or dissociation so complete as to destroy the very possibility of effective

domination.' 'The goal would be Native societies in which Natives are their own masters freed from their present position of subordination to Whites.'

When at the conclusion of his full account of the situation he describes this solution which seems to him to be both wise and just he finds it necessary to add that he believes it to be unrealizable. Why so? 'Because the will to realize it is not there, nor is there any power on earth which can bring it into being.' But there is, after all, a power not on earth, 'a reason out of nature,' that can change these hard hearts. Professor Hoernlé indeed points us in this direction when he speaks of 'the spectre of the Untergang des Abendlandes, of the passing of the Great Race' as 'striking a cold chill into the hearts of many Whites,' and adds, 'it is the inevitable terror of those whose lives are not devoted to the service of Eternal Values.'

NICOL MACNICOL.

BARTH TO BRITISH CHRISTIANS.

The most recent 'Christian News-Letter Books' are *A Letter to Great Britain from Switzerland*, by Professor Karl Barth, and *Japan in the World Crisis*, by the Rev. C. J. Stranks (Sheldon Press; 1s. 6d. each). The former will be the more popular because of its author, but the latter is by far the more important. Professor Barth has written his letter at the suggestion of Dr. J. H. Oldham and Mr. A. R. Vidler, and his purpose is to state clearly the ground on which he justifies this war. 'We approve it as a righteous war, which God does not simply allow, but which He commands us to wage.' And again: 'the ultimate reason which I put forward for the necessity of resisting Hitler was simply the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' That is definite enough, and Professor Barth is very definite because apparently he is not quite sure that we in this country are as clear or fundamental about the matter. And so he excludes from the real objective such conceptions as 'Western civilization,' 'the liberty of the individual,' 'freedom of knowledge,' 'the infinite value of the human personality,' 'the brotherhood of men' or 'social justice.' He values these things, but it is not for them God has 'commanded' us to wage this war. He is evidently afraid we do not put them in the same subordinate position, though he is very polite in the way he suggests his doubt.

These statements of Barth's, if you accept them, are a complete answer to pacifism; but his position in this matter is peculiar. 'We do not exclude the possibility,' he writes, 'that the well-known arguments of Christian pacifism, which twenty-five years ago we either made our own or which at any rate deeply disturbed us, may later, in a different situation and in a different form, once again bring us under their power. But on the other hand we cannot deny that at present those arguments, in the form in which we know them, have not this power.' But surely the supreme test of pacifism is just a war like this one, and if it fails in this it can have no validity at any time.

On one point of importance there will be widespread disagreement with Professor Barth. He thinks we should not busy ourselves about 'plans and pictures of the economic and social, national and international, and lastly the religious conditions in the new order which must be established after the war,' and he points out that the British Government has 'very wisely' refrained from stating any peace aims. He would therefore probably disapprove of the manifesto issued by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill with its clear statement of the new order for which we are contending. On this and other matters Dr. Barth sets forth his position, if not clearly, at any rate characteristically, in this pamphlet; and, if there is little that is new or impressive in his argument, the spirit of the letter is attractively Christian.

Mr. Stranks's little book on Japan is altogether admirable. It contains a clear account, by a well-informed observer, of Japan's policy and its roots in the national character and history. Even those who have read Mr. Gunther's 'Inside Asia' will receive enlightenment from Mr. Stranks. In particular, he makes it quite clear that Japan's nationalism is native-born. She owes nothing to Germany in this respect. The same may be said of her youth movement and the 'New Order' to which she is devoted. This new order is the mastery of Asia by a tripartite combination of Japan, Manchukuo, and China. To the exposition of these matters Mr. Stranks devotes his all too small book. He was formerly a missionary in Japan, and possesses a keen intelligence and a statesmanlike outlook. And he has been able to pack into a small space, without being cramped, an amazingly vivid account of Japan, her people, and her ambitions.

F. J. RAE.

In *Jesus as They Remembered Him* (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press; $1.50) the writer, the Rev. Chester Warren Quimby, sets out to give a portrait of Jesus somewhat after the manner of Glover's well-known book. The result is a very readable presentation of the character and personality of

Jesus in the days of His flesh. Chapters are given to such topics as His Environment, His Experiences, His Emotions, His Motives, His Gospel. The colours are perhaps at times unduly heightened and there is a confidence in interpreting the mind of the Master which is somewhat overbold. But the general impression left on the reader's mind is very clear and distinctive. It should be said that this is no merely humanistic portrait of Jesus. On the contrary, the writer is at pains to emphasize that 'these chapters are but a prelude to the Gospel.' It is a sincere endeavour to make Jesus as He walked and taught in Galilee more real to the modern mind.

Those who were charmed by Mr. Rom Landau's book, 'Love for a Country,' will sit down to read *We Have Seen Evil* (Faber & Faber; 7s. 6d. net) with pleasurable anticipation. The title is taken from the Ninetieth Psalm, and it is not a good title because it does not really indicate the contents of the book. These can be better shown by the headings of its different parts: The Protagonists (Hitler and Mussolini); The Two Germanys; The Issues at Stake; Spiritual Responsibility; and Towards What Better Future? Mr. Landau is convinced that Hitler is a 'medium' used by the infernal powers for evil ends, just as the good powers use a St. Francis. This accounts for his second sight, his inspirations, his independence. But there is another source of his power. He embodies the real Germany. There are not two Germanys. There is only one and if you want to see the real Germany look at Hitler. And so what we shall have to do after the war is to educate Germany. This, plus a federalism of German states with regional independence, is the only way of gaining a permanent peace. But we ourselves must strive to be worthy of a leadership which Providence has thrust upon us. That means a very genuine return to God and an acceptance of the yoke of Christ. Can the churches assist in this? Mr. Landau is very hard on the churches. His criticism is much too unbalanced. But it will not do churchmen any harm to hear what an acute and sympathetic observer has to say about them. The force of Mr. Landau's statements about Germany and her leaders comes from the fact that he writes from inside knowledge. If his theory of mediumship applied to Hitler seems bizarre, it is worthy of note that Barth appears to take the same view in his letter to British Christians reviewed elsewhere.

In *Ten Statesmen and Jesus Christ* (Hodder & Stoughton; 3s. 6d. net) the Rev. W. E. Sangster, M.A., has written what he calls 'A Christian Commentary on our War Aims.' His method is as follows. A selected group of public men have at different times stated what they believe we are fighting for—Mr. Amery, for Life; Mr. Attlee, for Peace; Mr. S. M. Bruce, for Justice; Mr. Churchill, for Security; Mr. Eden, for Freedom; Mr. Greenwood, for A New Order; Lord Halifax, for Progress; Mr. Mackenzie King, for Democracy; Sir Archibald Sinclair, for Decency; and General Smuts, for Spiritual Things. Their words are quoted, and Mr. Sangster proceeds to show that none of these aims can be attained apart from Jesus Christ. There is nothing very original in the book, but the idea is good and it is carried out with point and interest. The book is worth reading if only for the illustrations and stories with which it abounds. They are well chosen, and many of them are new enough to be useful.

The Upper Room, by Mr. R. A. Edwards (Methuen; 7s. 6d. net) is a very praiseworthy attempt to reconstruct the mental attitude of the disciples and of the Jewish rulers and people to Jesus in the days preceding the Crucifixion. This is done with vividness and imagination. The main purpose of the writer, however, goes much deeper. His aim is to clear away from the great Christian doctrines of the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Kingdom of God the accretions of later ages and to show how naturally and inevitably the impressions which were afterwards expressed in these doctrines were first imprinted on the minds and hearts of the original band of Christ's followers. In this endeavour the writer has attained a high degree of success. His work is thoughtful and thought-provoking. By its lucidity, its reasonableness, and its fine Christian spirit it is sure to be helpful to many.

Mr. Neville Hobson, M.C., J.P., has done much work among youth, and in *Unity, Peace and Concord* (S.C.M.; 1s. net) he makes an earnest 'appeal to the Christian Churches on behalf of youth.' The burden of his appeal is that the Churches should break down the walls that separate them and present a more united front if they hope to win the youth of to-day. He writes as a loyal member and lay reader of the Church of England, and it is to be hoped that his words will be taken to heart in his own Church above all. For it appears that while the Church of England speaks much about union, the Church of Scotland and the Nonconformist Churches of England stand with open doors ready to welcome their brethren to the pulpit and the Communion Table.

Form Criticism.[1]

By the Reverend F. J. Badcock, D.D., St. Augustine's College, Canterbury.

Form Criticism is one of the two English phrases —the other being Form History—used to translate the German word *Formgeschichte*. The theory has been elaborated in Germany by Dibelius and others and popularized in England by Dr. R. H. Lightfoot in his Bampton Lectures entitled *History and Interpretation in the Gospels*. The problem to be solved is to discover what lay behind the Gospels before they were brought together in something approaching their present state. All are agreed that the Synoptic Gospels at any rate consist in a number of individual stories. For a large part these are strung together in an attempt at chronological or topographical sequence, though neither of these is true of the narrative combined in what is called the 'Great Interpolation' in Lk 9^{51}–18^{14}, in which it is impossible to find any such sequence at all. Any one with a little patience can sort these stories into some kind of classes. There are for instance parables, there are stories leading up to a miracle, there are those the climax of which is a striking saying, and so forth. And further, it will be noticed that the several groups of stories tend to exhibit a similar pattern. If this were all, form criticism would have made no new discovery nor any striking contribution to the study of the Gospels. If any writer tells a series of stories of similar import, he may well acquire the habit of telling those of a certain type in much the same way. St. Mark and the compiler of the Gospel called by the name of St. Matthew each has mannerisms of his own; St. Mark repeatedly says 'straightway' and St. Matthew 'then,' which latter is almost certainly an Aramaicism. But Professor Turner in his studies of 'Marcan Usage' in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, vols. xxv., xxvi. has elaborated the internal evidence for assigning large portions of St. Mark's Gospel to St. Peter, which, of course, has been the traditional account of its origin from the time of Justin Martyr. In consequence the form of the stories may be due to the writer, or to the original narrator, in this case St. Peter.

But such an account does not satisfy the form-critic. He asserts not only (what is at least highly probable and will seem to many to be certainly true) that the various stories were passed on from mouth to mouth, but also that the evangelist collected them, not directly from some original witness of the events, but after a prolonged process of such transmission. And some form-critics would go even further. In cases in which a story does not agree strictly with its type-pattern they would assert that these eccentricities, if we may so call them, were later additions and should be pruned away; though of course the very opposite may be the truer account, that while the mass have had their angles and edges worn off, these, by their very nonconformity to type, are shown to be closer to the original. And finally, it is held that the various stories were thus treated, because, whether by way of precept or example, they furnished standards of appeal in the difficult problems which beset the Early Church, and an analogy is found in the stories of heroes and teachers in what is called 'saga literature' Jewish and pagan. On this general scheme one remark is obvious.

This process of gradual moulding, in the course of which the stories were so modified that considerable allowance must be made for additions and diminutions before we can arrive at the true account of the event, would seem to demand a considerable interval of time. But it is now established that the Crucifixion took place in A.D. 33 and that all the Gospels were composed and in circulation by the end of the first century; we cannot therefore allow for a period of more than sixty years for the composition of any of them, and further, the Gospels according to St. Mark and St. Luke may well be all written within a quarter of a century after the last event narrated, while Q, which has been embodied in St. Luke and St. Matthew, may be at least ten years earlier. To the argument that form criticism demands a prolonged period and therefore that the composition of the Gospels must be put late there is thus an obvious reply, that other considerations both allow and suggest that their composition may be put far earlier, and this casts doubts on the validity of the theory of form criticism.

No doubt a saga takes some time to acquire its definite shape, but the analogy affords no help; the

[1] Next month an article will appear by Professor R. H. Lightfoot which will be in some sense an answer to the present one. In it Professor Lightfoot shows why 'the whole basis of the form criticism theory' seems to him unlikely 'to dissolve and vanish in a short time.'

Gospel stories are not like sagas except that they revolve round a central heroic figure. We have examples of Hebrew sagas in the poem of Lamech (Gn $4^{23.\ 24}$); the Song of Deborah (Jg 5); and such fragments as we can recover from the Book of Jashar including the words of Joshua (Jos 10^{12-15}); and the lament of David over Saul and Jonathan (2 S 1^{18-27}); and the sort of stories which were composed to meet the popular demand can be seen in the Apocryphal Gospels. Not only are these extremely unlike the Gospels, but we have the express testimony of St. Luke that he disregarded all such stories as being inaccurate and unreliable and drew on the most primitive and authentic sources known to him (Lk 1^{1-4}). But the fundamental error of the method lies in the presupposition that what the original preachers supplied in their instructions was specimens of Christ's conduct and teaching, and that this formed the main substance of their discourses. The people who listened to the apostles and the evangelists were the most religious of the various populations which they encountered. What they might perhaps have thought that they wanted was an example and teaching, but what at the bottom of their hearts they knew they needed was redemption and salvation, a new heart or spirit and a new life, and it was about this that their teachers spoke. Professor Dibelius writes as though their main concern was with the earthly life of Jesus. This is fundamentally untrue; each of the Gospels devotes an inordinate space to the narrative of the Passion, as though the death of Jesus and all that surrounds it was of far more importance than the ministerial life which preceded it; and the death would have had no value, but for the fact that it was the prelude to the Resurrection and the life beyond; and of the Resurrection narratives he says nothing. What St. Paul, what all Christian teachers proclaimed, was the Messiah crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the heathen folly, but to the Christian who believed the power and the wisdom of God (1 Co $1^{23.\ 24}$). It is really impossible to estimate fairly the Gospel narratives or sources as though those who gave them birth had a Pelagian outlook. It was not what Christ taught, or even what He did that was felt by the early Christians to be of vital importance, but what was done to Him, and what in consequence He had thereby acquired the power of doing and did in them and to them.

From the point of view of Professor Dibelius and others like him the astounding thing is that the rest of the New Testament, itself written while the process of transmission and moulding was in progress, is almost wholly against a theory which might seem to be so plausible and to contain so much common sense, and that it testifies against him not only by the mere absence of evidence in his favour, which is merely negative, but by what a logician would call something privative, the absence of evidence which we might expect to be present, and the presence of something widely different.

There are, in fact, two reasons for telling a story: the first is that some one desires to hear it, and the second, which Professor Dibelius leaves out altogether, that some one desires to tell it. Take the case of the miracle stories. Two facts strike the mind at once, the first that the Gospel of St. Mark, which is in large measure Petrine, contains more miracle stories in proportion to its length than any of the other three, and the second that in the whole of the rest of the New Testament the only references to Christ's miracles are in two speeches both attributed to St. Peter.

If we add to these the miracles recorded by St. Luke, we note that two-thirds of them are healing miracles and that such miracles form also by far the major part of these narrated in the Acts, and we reflect that St. Luke was a physician. In the Fourth Gospel, which is later than these two, we have but seven miracles before the Resurrection, and these appear to be selected partly because they marked some advance in the personal belief of the narrator, and partly because, to use his own term, they were 'signs' and had for him a spiritual or doctrinal significance.

And we note further that in the two speeches of St. Peter the miracles of Christ are mentioned to an audience already familiar with them: 'which God did by him *in the midst of you*' (Ac 2^{22}), 'that saying *ye yourselves know* . . . how that God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him' (Ac $10^{37.\ 38}$). In the rest of the New Testament there is indeed an appeal to miracles but not to the miracles of Christ, 'He therefore that supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the message of faith?' (Gal 3^{5}). 'To one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom . . . to another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit; and to another workings of miracles' (1 Co 12^{8-10}). 'Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works' (2 Co 12^{12}).

If we want first-hand testimony to the working of miracles we have it here, but the miracles wrought

by Christ were not appealed to except among those who had seen them (1) because while the sight of a miracle is striking, and excites interest and inquiry, the mere story of a miracle may tend to arouse disbelief rather than belief; (2) because miracles were attributed to all kinds of charlatans and imposters, such as Simon Magus or Elymas the sorcerer, and devils were cast out by the sons of the Pharisees (Mt 12^{27}, Lk 11^{19}); and (3) because they could in no case prove even the messiahship of Jesus, seeing that others who were not the Messiah did much the same things, but at most, as St. Peter said, that 'God was with him,' and in consequence they had little evidential value. These considerations confirm what has been already said, that the miracles of Christ were spoken of on account of the interest taken in them by the original narrator rather than for the sake of the edification of the audience.

The example and precepts of Christ are supposed to have attained the form in which they are narrated by being repeatedly quoted as precedents or rules so as to help in solving the problems which beset the Early Church. We know what was one of the most pressing of those problems. It was how far the Gentile converts were under obligation to keep the Jewish law. Christ's example and language might have been quoted on either side. It might have been urged that He himself underwent circumcision, that He constantly frequented the synagogue, that He presented Himself at least at one of the great feasts in Jerusalem every year, which was all that was required of a Galilean, that He paid the temple tax of the half-shekel, that He said, 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all things therefore whatsoever they bid you do, these do and observe' (Mt $23^{2.3}$), and 'Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5^{20}).

Or it might have been urged that He claimed to be 'lord of the sabbath' (Mk 2^{28}) and healed on the sabbath, and pronounced all meats clean (Mk 7^{19}).

We possess two accounts of the incidents of this controversy, one in the Acts and the other in St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, and we find that in neither is Christ's example or precepts quoted at all, but appeal is made to an allegorical interpretation of a passage in the Book of Amos (Ac 15^{16-18}).

Again, St. Paul was exceedingly anxious about the great collection for the poor Christians at Jerusalem, which, he thought, might help to establish better feeling and a closer union between the Jewish and Gentile sections of the Church. He gives directions to the Corinthians how the money should be accumulated, he quotes to them the example of Macedonia as a stimulus to their liberality, but though Christ spoke of the danger of riches as an impediment to entrance into the kingdom of heaven, though He illustrated His point with parables such as that of the rich fool, and of the rich man and Lazarus, St. Paul quotes none of these, but points the Corinthians to the example of Christ, not in the course of His ministerial life, but in the Incarnation itself, 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor' (2 Co 8^{9}). Once indeed St. Paul does quote Christ's words, to the Ephesian elders assembled at Miletus, 'Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive' (Ac 20^{35}), and this saying, although it was very possibly contained in Q, is not given in the Gospels.

And similarly St. James, or the author of the Epistle which goes by his name, has much to say about the misdoings of the rich, including 'Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted; and their rust shall be for a testimony against you. Ye have laid up your treasure in the last days' ($5^{2.3}$), but there is no reference to 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal' (Mt 6^{19}, cf. Lk 12^{33}), nor any appeal to Christ's authority.

So he writes, 'But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall not under judgement' (5^{12}), but again there is no reference to 'but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. . . . But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one' (Mt $5^{34.35.37}$). Though the passages are so much alike St. James appeals not to the authority of Jesus but to his own.

Again, Jesus had much to say about prayer, including the parable of the importunate widow, and naturally enough the obligation of prayer was repeatedly laid upon the early convert, but when appeal is made to example, it is not to the example of Jesus except in a passage dealing with the passion (He 5^{7}), but to Elijah (Ja 5^{17}).

So the Christian religion lays a tremendous emphasis on the need of faith, and over and over

again Jesus had demanded it, but the examples of faith are drawn from the Old Testament, Abraham especially, and the long catalogue of the faithful in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Or St. Paul has instructions to give on the duty of Christians towards civil rulers, but he omits to quote (and the absence is conspicuous), 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's' and takes the Jewish standpoint that the civil rulers represent God's authority, and that disobedience will incur punishment.

So far is it from being true that Christ's example and words were constantly quoted as the authority by which conduct was to be regulated and controversies determined, that the whole of the rest of the New Testament outside the Gospels would seem to show that knowledge of them was not in demand.

Or take the long series of rules for Christian conduct, as it may be regarded, known as the Sermon on the Mount. Not only is this never referred to but we know what the early Christians thought should take the place which it might be expected to occupy. The Judaizing section, composed of men undoubtedly of a higher morality than that of their Gentile brethren, urged that what was needed was the law of Moses, and there is one quotation from this in the letters of St. Paul, 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise)' (Eph $6^{1.\ 2}$). But for the most part St. Paul has another answer based on what Professor Dibelius, who is here followed by Professor Dodd, called the *Kerygma*, the summary of the facts of dogmatic significance, the Incarnation, the Passion, the Death, the Glorification of Jesus, and the coming of the Holy Spirit to be the inner life of the Church and of the individual Christian. 'You cannot do this,' 'you must do that,' says St. Paul, because—because you are the child of God, a member of Christ, the shrine of the Holy Spirit. Have faith, have hope, and above all have charity, because these dogmatic facts are true. St. Paul lays the strongest emphasis on the need of belief in the elements of the Christian creed and regards a certain kind of conduct as obligatory as following from it. A large portion of the New Testament outside the Gospels is the work of St. Paul and it might perhaps be thought that the reason why he does not allude to Christ's life and words is that he was ignorant regarding them. But besides the example quoted there are at least four other allusions: 'Unto the married I give charge, yet not I, but the Lord, That the wife depart not (μὴ χωρισθῆναι) from her husband' (1 Co 7^{10}), cf. Mk 10^{9} ὃ οὖν ὁ θεὸς συνέζευξεν ἄνθρωπος μὴ χωριζέτω, 'so did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel,' and 'I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night that he was betrayed took bread,' etc. (1 Co 11^{23}). 'If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord' (1 Co 14^{37}); and if the Crucifixion took place in A.D. 33 and St. Paul's conversion some three years later, it is highly probable, and Moulton and B. Weiss think it certain, that he was in Jerusalem at least for the week of the Passion, and knew St. Peter, St. John, and St. Mark and St. James the Lord's brother. This plea therefore will not avail.

But the whole idea that the early teachers must have taught and their pupils been hungry to learn the events of Christ's ministerial life rests on a very limited analogy which is in the nature of an exception. We may be indeed thankful for the wide diffusion of the Bible, so that in one year a single publishing house can dispose of more than eleven million copies of the whole or parts of it, and there is no doubt that what sells the remainder is the accounts of the life and acts and words and death of Jesus, which we call the Gospel. But the movement is a modern movement and almost confined to the reformed or evangelical communities, and we have only to ask ourselves how much of the Gospel stories are heard or known by the members of the Roman Catholic or Eastern Churches to see the contrast. So it is to-day, so it was, or more so, in mediaeval times. Professor Coulton asserts with no fear of contradiction that scarcely one priest in a hundred had ever had a Bible in his hand and scarcely one in a thousand possessed a copy or had read it through.[1] Or consider what instruction would be given to-day to an adult candidate for baptism. He would be taught the Christian belief, the great facts of the Creed, no doubt with some measure of explanation, that is the *kerygma* of Professor Dibelius and Professor Dodd, and it is noteworthy that in the Christian creed there is not one word about the miracles wrought by Christ as distinct from those wrought upon Him, nor about His teaching; he would be taught about Church usage and especially about sacraments and he would receive instruction also, on rules of Christian conduct. Go back to the catechetical lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem in the fourth century

[1] *Guardian*, Aug. 30, 1940, p. 394.

and you will find much the same course of instruction. And then turn to the New Testament, and it will not cause you surprise that to judge from the rest of the writings between the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse the contents run in general on these lines.

But when by using this evidence we have been enabled to penetrate some little way into the mind of the early converts and their teachers, we find that the whole basis of the form criticism theory has been dissolved and has vanished. It is ingenious, it is to some extent plausible, there are suggestions that it might contain fragments of truth. So it was with the Tübingen theory, and there is no reason to doubt that in a short time the theory of form criticism will share the same fate.

The Interpretation of the Parables.

By the Reverend Professor Allan Barr, M.A., Edinburgh.

The interest of the parables of Jesus is perennial, but from time to time a fresh revelation of their significance is given as they are viewed from a new standpoint or approached with new methods of study. Most of the many works on this subject which have recently appeared show the influence of new ideas, and notable contributions have come from such scholarly studies as *The Parables of Jesus, Their Art and Use*, by Dr. A. T. Cadoux; *The Parables of the Kingdom*, by Professor C. H. Dodd; *The Gospel Parables in the Light of Their Jewish Background*, by Dr. W. O. E. Oesterley; *The Parables of the Synoptic Gospels*, by Dr. B. T. D. Smith. The reader who compares any of these books with older works, such as those by Archbishop Trench and A. B. Bruce, will realize the change that half a century or so has brought to this study, in general approach, in critical methods, and in results. The impulse to the radical change which has now become apparent may justly be attributed to Adolf Jülicher's *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*[2] (1899). No doubt Jülicher had his forerunners, and there have always been those who objected to the more extravagant methods of interpretation, but the issue was now brought to light by thorough exegesis, and the decision pronounced with uncompromising clearness. Jesus never used allegory. From Jülicher's position there has since been some reaction, but he set the study of the parables upon a new course, in which his successors have received further guidance from the progress of Synoptic studies, the development of form-criticism and the growing understanding of Rabbinical literature.

In literature, as in music and the other arts, a very fine distinction in form may have consequences of quite disproportionate magnitude. Allegory and parable are like rivers that have neighbouring sources. Both are instruments of the teacher; both are works of the imagination, based on the power of the mind to see resemblances, to bring together like to like; both are related to the simpler forms of figurative speech, the simile and the metaphor. Reduced to the barest rudiments of form, the parable differs from the allegory in the number of points at which a comparison is drawn, a resemblance indicated. The parable is a story with one such point, the allegory with more than one. This elementary distinction in form does not take us far. At the source we may have one foot in parable, one in allegory. But we are on the watershed, and the streams run in opposite directions into different oceans. In consequence of its concentration on a single point of comparison the developed parable is an organic unity, every detail being subordinate to and contributing to its culmination. It is essential that such details should appear natural, realistic, to the listener, keeping to the level of his experience and avoiding anything that seems unfamiliar or impossible. As reason rather than simple imagination is a unifying force, the culmination of the parable—its point—is a judgment, not a picture. The transfer of this judgment to an analogous situation in another sphere is the application of the parable. To lead to this analogy is the work of the teacher; the power to appreciate it depends upon the listener. On the other hand, the interest in establishing a number of points of comparison leads allegory in quite a different direction. If a long series of resemblances is to be set forth, ingenuity cannot prevent the breakdown of the realism, the consistency and the organic

unity of the discourse. Imagination rather than reason dominates. The allegory is a series of pictures, each representing, symbolizing, and for the moment identical with one of a series of truths in another sphere. So the allegory appeals primarily to the initiated, who hold the key to its application. It confirms truth by the vividness and appropriateness of its images. But the parable is a weapon of conquest. It argues and convinces. It brings a man unwittingly, or even unwillingly, as so often in Jesus' parables, to a new apprehension of the truth and a realization of the inconsistency of his opinions and conduct with it. So the parable must be a brief and pointed story, economical in words, not too long for the listener to retain his grasp on everything till the culmination is reached and he is confronted with truth to which his own experience compels assent.

The importance of Jülicher's view lay not in relation to extended allegory, which is easily recognized, but firstly to allegorical elements incorporated in the parables as we have them in the Gospels, and secondly to the methods of interpretation which more or less prevailed in the Church for eighteen centuries. The intrusion of allegory into the parables of Jesus is one feature of an extraordinary situation that confronts us in the Gospels. Already the parables have become 'mysteries,' the significance of which is revealed only to Jesus' intimate followers. The passage in Mark (4^{10-12}) which seems to represent Jesus' use of parables as an intentional means of obscuring the truth (in fulfilment of prophecy) for 'them that are without' should not be given too much weight, for this conception does not control even Mark's presentation of the parables, but it is an indication that the evangelists are at a loss to know how to handle them. This perplexity may have been due in part to the overlapping in the Old Testament of the provinces of the *mashal* (comparison, parable) and the *ḥidah* (riddle) and the coupling of the two terms in parallelism, but the root of the matter is more likely to be found in the separation of the parables of Jesus at an early stage of the tradition from the concrete situations which evoked them. Many of the parables had to be re-applied. To a few of them, as the Sower and the Tares, the evangelists append a point-by-point interpretation, more appropriate to allegories, while into others allegorical elements in line with the interests of the Early Church have apparently been introduced. Some of the parables may have carried their original context with them, others the evangelists have allocated to more or less appropriate situations. But in many cases the original setting and application of the parables have not been recorded or are open to dispute.

The Gospel parables gave the first impulse to the detailed or allegorical treatment which has characterized interpretation ever since. It is not necessary to dwell on the extravagances to which this led. Who are the ten virgins? Why ten, five and five? What is the woman's lamp and broom? Who is the Samaritan, and what his ass, the inn, the wine and oil, what the robe, the ring, and the shoes brought forth for the prodigal on his return? In the working out of such detailed parallelism, whether with ecclesiastical or doctrinal or homiletic interests, the commentators, both ancient and more recent, stop short only at the absurd, and sometimes not even there.

Yet one may exaggerate this misunderstanding. To begin with the Gospels, it must be observed that only a limited number of the parables receive a detailed interpretation. And not only are many others left unaffected by the evangelists' tendency in this direction, but there are some, particularly in Luke, which are strongly protected against allegorization. These are the parables, such as the Unjust Steward, the Godless Judge, the Importunate Friend, in which the *a fortiori* argument is fully developed. There are some thorny difficulties in these parables, but they are not rooted in the questionable character of the judge or the steward. The argument would still hold if the judge were a God-fearing and merciful man, and the widow had a better case and more respectful manners, but it is greatly reinforced by the character actually attributed to them in the parable. The judge, as the hearer of prayer, has a position analogous to God's, but there is no room for allegorical identification when he is described—and describes himself—as 'one who fears not God nor heeds man.' In Matthew's parables, too, *e.g.* the Hidden Treasure or the Labourers in the Vineyard, we sometimes find a similar line of argument. But Luke especially seems to have been attracted to this type of logic, and he may have modified some of the parables in this direction. We must be grateful that he has left the father of the prodigal son a natural and admirable figure, and not attempted to reinforce the argument by extending the distance between God and the father who rejoices over his son's return.

It would also be a mistake to suppose that no brake was put upon the wheels of fantasy in the later interpretation of the parables. From Tertullian, Chrysostom, and others come protests

against the more extreme allegorizations, though it must be confessed that the limitations and errors of this method were more often observed by the Fathers in the works of their opponents than in their own. It must also in fairness be said that in allegorizing the parables past commentators and preachers must often have been fully aware that they had passed beyond the field of exegesis, and would claim only to be using the parables as illustrations for purposes of their own. No doubt the Church was indebted here as so often to the heretics. From the early Gnostic controversies onward it became apparent that the parables were among the 'other scriptures, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, unto their own destruction.' This helped to create a sense of danger in arguing from the parables, and the principle that 'the parables may not be made primary sources and seats of doctrine' is of long standing. Apart from any consciously adopted principle, men have always been guided in their interpretations by their perception of spiritual values, and robust minds have revolted against methods which, when carried to extremes, sacrificed the beauty and force of the parables, as well as commonsense, for less important interests.

From Jülicher's out-and-out condemnation of all allegorical elements in the original parables, there has been some reaction. It is too rigid a standard to insist that each parable must have only one point of judgment, and to reject any subordinate analogy inherent in its details. Provided that it does not interfere with the realism of the narrative or with its organic unity, a subordinate parabolic point may be admitted. Such is the case with the elder son in the parable of the Prodigal. The concluding part of the parable is not essential, yet it adds force to the main judgment, preserves parabolic realism, and is appropriate to the context in which Luke has placed the group of parables. It is very different with the incident of the man lacking a wedding robe, which Matthew appends to the parable of the Wedding Feast. There is allegory here, or at the least the combination of two distinct parables. The addition violates the verisimilitude of the parable and does not even fit its conclusion—'Many are called, but few are chosen' (Mt 22^{14}). As regards the detailed method of treatment suggested by the evangelists, it is not to be dogmatically denied that Jesus may have discussed His parables with the disciples, and drawn from them lessons that did not appear in His public teaching. There are objections to the parable of the Sower as presented and interpreted in the Gospels, but they do not merely lie in the fact that the parable has a plurality of points of comparison. Dibelius uses the term 'half-allegories' for certain of the discourses, and points to the likelihood that some terms, such as king, judge, vineyard, harvest, marriage-feast, had, by their history and associations, acquired a conventional, almost an allegorical significance in parable among Jesus' contemporaries. It is interesting to find that even the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (Mt, Mk, Lk), which Jülicher judged to be wholly an allegory of secondary origin, receives some rehabilitation at the hands of recent commentators.

It remains true, however, that a radical change has been made in the approach to the parables, and some of the main features of the new method may now be noted. The work of present interpreters is marked by a stringent application of the test of realism. Jesus was the greatest master of the art of the parable, and it is assumed that every parable of His was a picture drawn from life. Hence these commentaries are full of references to the natural features of Palestine and the social conditions of Jesus' time, as well as to the formal characteristics of parabolic narrative. Information is drawn from many sources, parallels are adduced from Rabbinical and other writings, all to test and illustrate the verisimilitude of Jesus' parables. It need hardly be said that the parables, even as we have them in the Gospels, come well out of the test. Inconsistencies are found, due to faulty transmission, extraneous elements are detected, revealing later conditions, but on the whole the parables stand, true to life, full of human interest, a priceless testimony to Jesus' knowledge and love of common things and common men.

On the side of application, modern interpreters, in spite of very great divergencies from one another in particular cases, agree in certain tendencies which lead them to results markedly different from those attained by their predecessors. When the allegorical method was discredited, Jülicher and others were inclined to work out each parable to an application consisting of a moral or spiritual truth of a very broad and general kind, not unlike the 'morals' of fables. The parable of the Unjust Steward resulted in the teaching that men should be prudent in spiritual things—rather a meagre reward for all the labour and sweat of exegetes; the Mustard Seed pointed to the truth that small beginnings have great endings; and so on. In the Gospels themselves generalizations of this sort are attached to some of the parables, as if for the evangelists this were an alternative line of inter-

pretation to the detailed parallelism worked out in the Sower and some other cases. Examples are the sayings, 'The first shall be last, and the last first,' 'Many are called but few are chosen,' 'Men ought always to pray and not to faint.' Such generalizations, even where they are ethical in substance, give a theoretic colour to the parables which removes them from the practical and critical issues of Jesus' ministry. Recent interpreters have swung away from this type of application, and make it their object to attach each parable to a concrete situation, known, conjectured, or imagined, in the intercourse of Jesus with followers or opponents, strangers or friends. The parables are the instruments of Jesus' challenge to men. By them He teaches men the truth, but it is truth which, in Johannine phrase, they must *do*. Two important consequences of this insistence on the practical bearing of Jesus' parabolic teaching must be noticed.

In the first place it still further reduces the theoretic interest in interpretation, already curbed by the elimination of allegory. Take the parable of the Sower. If the interpretation given by Mark, which draws lessons from the various kinds of soil and the fate of the seed sown on each, goes beyond the original parable, it might seem to be a useful and helpful addition, and much indeed can be profitably taught by such expansion. But according to recent interpretation it obscures and blunts the parable. Classification is an intellectual and theoretic interest. In the Marcan interpretation the good soil receives least attention of all. But the point of the original parable is that, in spite of waste, good seed has its abundant harvest —a practical message, a word of encouragement to men who are at the sowing. The parable of the Seed Growing Secretly has received many titles, for it has not been found easy to fasten upon the centre of it. Bruce calls it 'The Blade, the Ear, and the Full Corn,' and expounds its message as that of the slow stages of growth in the Kingdom and in spiritual life generally. For present interpreters this is too theoretic an interest. The farmer has sown his seed, he waits, the harvest ripens for his sickle. It may be debated whether it is the waiting or the awaited harvest that is most in view, but at least it is a question of what the man must do or refrain from doing. Dr. Smith emphasizes the practical bearing of the parable by naming it 'The Patient Husbandman.'

The second consequence is this. If the parables aim at practical, not theoretic teaching, we do not find in them, and do not expect to find, a systematic exposition of the central beliefs of the Teacher. Accident might have deprived us in any case of the fullness and unity of such a system, when so many of Jesus' parables must have remained unrecorded. But apart from that, the parables, uttered as occasion demanded to meet the urgent need of men for decision, encouragement, warning, or reproach, concentrate upon the truth applicable to the need, which may not in fact be a central or cardinal truth, but some subordinate application or corollary of it, of vital importance at the moment. The parables of the Kingdom afford many illustrations of this principle.

As long as the *details* of the parables were considered to carry the teaching, almost every article of belief could be found there, as it were in cryptogram. But when attention is concentrated upon the single point at which each parable intersects the plane of spiritual reality, it is found as a matter of fact that the fundamental truths are not proved at the end of the process, but assumed at the beginning. Such truths as the existence of God, His righteousness and mercy, His redemptive activity in history, His purpose to ensure a glorious future for His people, are not discussed. In the logical structure of the parables they are premises, not conclusions. It is, for example, assumed that God cares for men at least as much as a shepherd cares for his sheep or a human father for his foolish son. The father receives the returning prodigal with joy (to that picture the listener gives assent, as to something right and true to experience). God's love and readiness to forgive are at least as great as a human father's. Therefore there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. This is not to say that the parable does not teach us about the love of God, but it teaches it by affirming it, by illustrating it, not at the end of a process of reasoning, not as the point upon which the logic of the parable converges.

It will already have been made apparent where the most difficult task of present interpretation lies. Many of the parables seem to have floated into the tradition, adrift from their original connexions, and often attached to new and extraneous material. To find a place, with anything like certainty, for each of these in its appropriate and original setting would appear to be an almost hopeless enterprise. We know so little of the life of Jesus, so many incidents which may have been the occasion of the extant parables have been forgotten. The task of assigning the parables to appropriate situations demands of the scholar an acute and often intuitive judgment, and in some

cases a large margin of conjecture must be allowed for. Consequently there is frequently divergence in the conclusions reached. Yet the method has not been without its agreed results, and scholars persist in a common effort to pass beyond general teaching to a particular application in the actual circumstances of Jesus' ministry.

Some who are familiar with the older method of discursive meditation on the details of the parables will perhaps regret a development that brings us to results which are often indecisive or even negative, and which at least temporarily may seem to increase the difficulty of interpreting Scripture to the ordinary reader. On the other hand there are positive gains, and time will no doubt sift out the truth in many cases where the judgment of scholars has diverged. The real test, however, is whether a method of study helps us to see Jesus, to understand His outlook upon the world, and to receive the truth of His gospel. Does the new light on the parables already assist us there?

Leaders of thought are commonly divided nowadays into optimists and pessimists according as they recognize or reject an inherent worth or value in the present world of our experience. Looking at the varied gallery of word-pictures which Jesus has created, do we not see everywhere the expression of what is, in this sense, a fundamentally optimistic view of Nature and of man? We are now well aware of the shallowness of sentimental humanism, and we know the inadequacy of the liberal portrait of Jesus which interprets Him on that level. But it is a different matter to fix a great gulf between Him and the world He lived in, between Him and the men He loved. We cannot now base our conviction of the optimism of the parables on a 'mystic' or sacramental correspondence between all earthly things and their perfect heavenly counterparts, a view that forms the basis of Trench's work. Whatever truth resides in such typology, it is not in the parables, as now understood, that we find it exemplified. We do not now see two parallel planes, heaven and earth, with the same pattern drawn on each, every point on the lower being a shadow corresponding with the bright reality above. That belongs to allegorical treatment. Instead we see a line of earth piercing the heavenly plane, and disclosing truth at the one point of contact.

Rather we see this optimism, in the first place, in the actual pictures of men and their world which Jesus paints. They are realistic pictures. They do not slur over men's vices, or cast a glamour of romantic idealism over imperfect things and ordinary men. But everywhere there is a lively interest in men's work and manners, in the field, at home, in the market-place; a penetrating understanding of their motives and conduct; the vision of the 'single eye' that sees good in all men, and even in the rogues sees qualities that may be admired and imitated. 'The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.' There is a fundamental hopefulness about humanity here, a generous estimate of human nature. The prodigal's folly is vividly exposed, yet when he repents in the far country, he comes 'to himself.' All Jesus' optimism, of course, has a religious basis. A deep sense of God's righteousness and grace pervades it all; and this distinguishes it from a facile humanism. But Jesus recognizes worth and nobility in men with a readiness that surprises us.

Not less noticeable is Jesus' optimism with regard to His hearers. Even to embody His teaching, as Jesus so regularly does, in vivid simile and metaphor implies a certain trust in humanity. What was to become of such sayings, a cautious critic might have asked, when let loose upon the world? What might men make of 'Knock, and it shall be opened unto you?' How much Jesus trusted His hearers and His followers! How much He left them to understand and do! This optimistic trust is conspicuous in the parables. Their method is to appeal to the hearer's reason and reasonableness, to assume that he has the root of the matter in him, to lead him from his present knowledge to fuller truth or to conduct more consistent with it. Above all, it is seen in the assumption of the central truths of religion to which reference has been made above. Jesus, of course, was speaking to Jews with a great history of religious education behind them. But even so His assumption that men are not only capable of religious truth, but in some measure are in possession of it, is very remarkable. The sin against which He speaks in hardest words is hypocrisy, which is sin against the light that is within.

There is another side to these considerations. The parables are so characteristic of Jesus, so authentic an expression of His mind, that no view of His Work and Person which bases itself on history can disregard their testimony. From time to time interpretations of Jesus appear which fasten upon some aspect of the eschatological teaching or the most severe of His denunciations and represent Him as a fanatical dreamer or an unstable revolutionary. Can any such view stand beside the parables? From time to time docetic views of Jesus appear, which keep Him ever a

stranger among men—in the world, yet only in appearance subject to its conditions. Do not the parables show Him to have been at home with men, a real friend of publicans and sinners? Jesus does not use illustrations from human life merely as the tools of His teaching. He shows that He knows men and cares for them and identifies Himself with them even in their commonest affairs. And finally, when He trusts His hearers' judgment even in spiritual things, when He assumes their knowledge of the principles of divine truth, do we not see something of Jesus Himself in that estimate of ordinary men? Is it not a reflection of His own consciousness of God, so deep and full and sure?

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Waste.

By the Reverend Sidney H. Price,
Great Shelford, Cambridge.

'To what purpose is this waste?'—Mt 26[8].

We are constantly being reminded not to waste. People are finding out how to use many things which once were destroyed. This is not merely a war-time measure. More than twenty years ago the Borough of Marylebone decided to deal with refuse in a systematic way, and they found that four-fifths of the waste they collected could be sold again. Cart-loads of rubbish were tipped into a machine which shook it up and sorted it into four groups. A magnet caught all the old tins and nails, while some of the rubbish passed on to a moving belt to be dealt with by a row of sorters. Anything that was considered unsaleable was taken to the boiler fire which supplied the heat for working the sorting machinery. Nothing was wasted: tins, bottles, rags, paper, and everything else that could be used again, these were all sold.

There are, however, some kinds of waste that cannot be sorted by machinery like that. Years ago, a man named Cobden said that people could be divided into two classes—those who save, and those who spend, or those who are careful, and those who waste. In a rough and ready way, no doubt, he was right. There are people who waste time, for instance. Idleness is a waste of time, and doing unnecessary and useless things may be a waste of time. Doing wrong is certainly wasting time, as we will all agree.

A doctor speaking on the wireless said that a bad temper wastes energy, and that people who give way to their temper are using energy they need for their work. We must remember that next time something or somebody upsets us.

We should, however, be careful what we call waste. You know the story of the woman who broke a jar of precious ointment over the feet of Jesus. Judas wanted to know why such waste was allowed, but Jesus said it was not wasted. He saw that there was great love behind that action, and what is done in love can never be really wasted, however much it might seem to be so.

When missionaries first went to the Congo, one after another died of sickness. Young men and women who had been well trained went out there, brave people they were too, knowing what had happened to others already, yet they went. Reports came home of one after another who died there, and people at home began to ask, Why this waste? It seemed a waste of fine young manhood and womanhood, a waste of money spent in their training and in sending them out, yet it was not waste. Because of those early missionaries, disease has been conquered, and it is now safe for other missionaries to go and tell people of the love of God. Because of those missionaries, thousands of African people have been saved from the diseases which at one time caused so many deaths.

Whatever is done in love is not wasted. The farmer is not wasting good seed when he buries it in the earth. He is preparing for the day when there will be a harvest. God is able to use all that you can give and all that you can do in the same way.

Stingless Bees.

By the Reverend D. T. Davies, M.A., B.D.,
London.

'A swarm of bees . . .'—Jg 14[8].

There came to our country the other day, a queen attended by a large number of her courtiers. On her arrival in London there was not the usual pomp and ceremony which attends the coming of a royal visitor to the capital of the Empire. The King did

not come to the station in the royal car, nor were the streets lined with troops by way of welcome. All that was seen was a specially heated saloon car. The Queen was a queen-bee with many hundreds of her own people—a present from the Government of Southern Rhodesia to the Keeper of the London Zoo.

Now, the first thing to notice about these bees is that they produce the finest honey in the world, and, secondly, that they have no sting in their tails; they are known as the stingless bees. If any one of us went with an empty pot and a spoon to procure honey from the hive of the ordinary bees in this country there would be the grave risk of being stung and, therefore, little chance of honey at all. Many clever devices have been made to avoid the sting when seeking to obtain honey from our bees. What a contrast, therefore, between these natives and the Rhodesian branch of the bee family!

The best honey comes from stingless bees. Many a gift loses its value because it is given with a bad grace. One never likes, in accepting a favour, to be told how poor is the receiver and how good and generous is the giver. There is a sting in the tail of a gift given in such a spirit. The right way of doing a good turn is to do it kindly and not with a grudge. This makes the receiver feel that his good angel is happy in the doing of it. The best honey comes from stingless bees—those kind friends who 'do good by stealth and blush to find it fame.' This comes very near what our Lord taught when He said that we should not let our right hand know what our left hand doeth.

There is a story of Jesus being asked out to dinner by a wealthy host. Looking round the table our Lord discerned that most of the guests had been invited with a view. The host expected them to return the favour by asking him in return to their homes. But the best kind of good deed is that which is rendered without any thought of a return or a reward, but from the simple aim of aiding some one who needs our friendship and will be glad of a helping hand.

The message of the best honey from stingless bees is echoed in that word in the Bible which tells us that 'The Lord loveth a cheerful giver'—one who gives from the sheer fun or joy of giving. Men are drawn together in response to some fine thing one sees in the other, just as Jonathan was drawn to admire and make a friend of David, or just as Tennyson was attracted to his friend Arthur Hallam. But the love of God, on the other hand, is as a fire kindled from within Himself, and all His gifts are given freely to us just because we have need of them. So we love Him because He has shown so much love to us first.

The Christian Year.

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

A Man's Life.

By the Reverend R. Wragge Morley, M.A., Bournemouth.

'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth'—Lk 12^{15}.

'A man's life'—it is a great phrase; there is something attractive about it. What is a man's life? In what does it consist? A few years before the war one who was statistically inclined calculated that one hundred years back the average man wanted seventy-two things and actually needed sixteen. At the time of his calculation he estimated that the average man wanted four hundred and eighty-four things and needed ninety-four. But all that is changed to-day. Life has got up and looked at us; and we have this and that taken away from us already and more probably to come. All the things we considered settled in life are shaken up. And if we are wise we are beginning to ask ourselves, What do we really need? If we are wise we are sorting out life's values afresh, seeking its meaning, discovering what are the essentials which, in a day when we certainly cannot have all we want, will satisfy us. Here then is a guiding word for us to-day.

'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.' It is a truism. We all acknowledge it in word. But it is a truism of which in life we take no account. The more fools we—if it is really true. And it is. Material things do not satisfy us. There is something in us besides the things to which these minister. There is, for example, the sense of the ideal, there is love, and the glory of a task and the lure of adventure, and a score of things besides. And our tenure of things is too uncertain. They are not really ours when we seem to possess them. This is the theme of the old morality play, the only one that has come down to us and is still to be seen at times on the modern stage, 'Everyman.' You know the story. Everyman finds that his own life is to be broken up and all that he had counted on is to be taken away. Death is coming, and he is to be pushed off into the unknown. Where can he get help? First he tries Fellowship, that is, his friends. But though Fellowship promises unfailing help, when he knows the purpose, that he shall go with Everyman through the gates of death, he will not do it. Then he turns to Kindred and Cousin, but they too fail him. He turns back on his Possessions, but they tell him they are not really his and never have been, and in any case

cannot go with him. Good Deeds, however, is ready to help. She first advises him to seek her sister Knowledge, and Knowledge answers in those great words that we probably all know, 'Everyman, I will go with thee and be thy Guide, in thy most need to go by thy side.' But at the end even she can only wait beside him to give him comfort, while Discretion, Strength, and Beauty, his new-found companions, turn back and leave him. Only Good Deeds remains, but she does not fail him, and together they make their journey into the unknown. Now, is the message of that mystery play right? Is the purpose of life in the creation of character, and in the discovery of service? It looks as though it is.

And great literature supports us in this view. Take Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*. It is the story of the scapegrace son of a farmer. Never will he face a difficulty; never has he lived for any one but himself. At last he does a deed which outrages society and he becomes an outlaw. You see him soon as a troll with a tail—like Pinocchio, and for the same reason, he has fallen below the level of a man. And the Troll King reminds him that, while the motto of men is 'Man, be thyself,' the trolls have another that he must take instead, 'Troll to thyself be enough.' So he goes on. Once he is almost redeemed by the one pure emotion he had had, his love for Solveig. But he can't get away from himself. Pleasure, irresponsibility and love of the easy way have become part of his being. At last the Button Moulder answers his plea by saying,

> Yourself you have never been, never; so why
> Does it matter at all if completely you die?

There it is again. A selfish life does not satisfy. 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.'

Life, then, consists in the development of character. Perhaps this is why at times its way seems hard. Taking it easy never leads to development. We are meant for something bigger than that. To use life for that purpose is like using a great electric hammer just to crack walnuts. It is ridiculous, incongruous, unworthy. Besides, great men have never been produced by reclining on beds of cushioned ease; and great races have not arisen as fortune's favourites. A life that shuns all difficulty and hardship is not big enough for a man's life. It is meant for a finer thing—

1. *The Development of Character.*

And as soon as we have said that we have left room in it for all the things that acquisitiveness and the pride of possessions leave out—those haunting dreams and values, those rich meanings which add greatness to a man's life. Whatever happens we must keep the spiritual interpretation of life. For that alone redeems it from meaninglessness and insignificance; it brings in the spaciousness and solidity of the eternal.

What, then, is character? There is no doubt about it for a Christian. For Christ not only taught it but lived it as well,

> In loveliness of perfect deeds,
> More strong than all poetic thought.

What is it? It is at least rectitude, compacted of sincerity and honour, and love which gains support from faith and hope. It is a thing positive, steadfast, dependable, calm—the very thing our days demand. Of course that kind of thing requires a struggle, but it is worth it. And all life has grown up in the same way. Listen to a scientist, 'The response of the organism to external stimulus is of the nature, not of a rebound, but of a reply.' In other words, the progress of creation from the swamp and jungle has been won by struggle with circumstances and not by surrender to them. Life has not been mechanically moulded by environment; it has grown by resistance and attack. What is the way of it then? Let me suggest three or four simple things.

Put first things first. We all know that this is our wisdom. But the trouble is we don't do it in actual living. William James used to say, in words that have a strangely familiar ring to-day, that our attitude towards life must be at all times, 'Everything is now at stake. It is fight or die.' So it is in the matter of creation of character. We must get our emphasis right.

Live positively and keep yourself at your best. Of course this means that you must learn to say 'no.' We can't have everything in life, and the choice of one requires the denial of another. But to say 'no' is of little use unless there is something bigger to which you are saying 'yes.' It is St. Paul's word, 'Whatsoever things are true, honourable, just, pure, lovely, think on these things.' True self-control is always positive. It isn't your environment that makes you, it is the part of it to which you attend. Do not say, 'I won't think of this,' when something low makes its appeal to you, for that just fills your mind with it. Think of something else more attractive, or do something that will occupy your mind. To quote St. Paul again, 'Overcome evil with good.'

When high moments come express them and build them in. It is the message Robert Browning spent his life drumming into our ears. It is the great way of advance and growth. Add to it this, Seek out the

best and company with them. Get the stimulus of some great character or hero and remember he was just a man too and had his difficulties no less than yours. And stop excusing yourself, or staying down when you fall below your best. If the Christian gospel means anything it means this, that if we really long for better things, no failure need deter us if we take our failure to Him with resolution to start afresh.

Keep at it. You remember the words Richard Baxter said in the days of the Civil War, 'We all thought one battle would end it, but we were all very much mistaken.' So it is in life. 'In your endurance ye shall win your souls.'

Keep the example and challenge of Jesus before you. For if ever any one revealed life in all its fullness and triumphant power He did. And we know He would not mock us when He challenged us to follow Him. So we might go on. But there is a second thing—

2. *The Achievement of Usefulness.*

The creation of worthwhile character in itself does this. But we shall never achieve it with our eyes on ourselves. In any case, the life which is self-centred is not big enough for a man's life. Listen to another scientist, 'Clearly selfishness is a survival of our animal past when every man had to follow the law of self-defence and self-interest if he would survive. But that deep-rooted habit of selfishness which was a virtue in a self-centred savage state has become an unlovely vice in enlightened society. It is a link with the animal from which we sprang, not a link with the manhood that is in the making.' That is why our instinct to make white represent holiness and black evil is so entirely right. For black is the most selfish of all colours, keeping every ray of light that falls upon it for itself. Blue rays, red rays, violet rays are all absorbed and seen no more. Black is just a symbol of greedy selfishness, while white returns every ray undiminished to continue its work elsewhere. And there is another thing. If we are sure that Jesus is the highest manhood we must live for other folk. For it was His unfailing way. He lived to give Himself out to others. And it is the great way of life and the happy way. You remember how Blanco Posnet, the cattle thief, in Shaw's play, was surprised into one great deed of service and sacrifice, and found it amazingly good and satisfying. 'Just bully,' he called it. And he went on, 'There is a great game and there is a rotten game. I played the rotten game, but the great game was played on me. And now I am for the great game every time.' This is the kind of life our times demand of us. We are in this thing together, we must each contribute to one another. And for all this we need a third thing—

3. *The Discovery of Reinforcement.*

The mere bringing in of the thought of God helps us in this. To be sure of a great and loving purpose working in all life, to remember that we come forth from Him, His children, and go to Him, our Father, gives a new meaning and value to life. It gives a new assurance of a stable foundation; it puts iron into the blood and strengthens our will and purpose. If this business is His battle I am not going to fail Him or whine in my part of it. Besides, the thought of God takes away the harassing anxiety which weakens us. A little blind girl was playing in the garden. Her father came out to her with a friend, and the friend picked her up and put her on his shoulder. She was quite unafraid. Her father said to her, 'Dear, do you know who has got you?' 'No, Daddy,' she replied, 'but you do.' So she was sure she was all right. That is what our faith should do to us. But there is more than all that. What was it changed His weak followers into men full of infectious joy and courage; that gave to men who had hitherto no self-dependence such powers of right decision? They were sure what it was. He was always there to help—God, the Holy Spirit, or their loved Lord—it was all the same to them. And He is still here.

> Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
> Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

When we have that assurance, as we can have about all worthwhile tasks, we know that we shall win.

There it is then, 'a man's life.' The development of character, the achievement of usefulness, the discovery of reinforcement—is there any other worthy of a man? If there is not, will you look into those eager eyes of Jesus with an answering resolution and give Him your hand.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Power of Words.

'Take with you words.'—Hos 14^{2}.

'A word in due season, how good is it!'—Pr 15^{23} (R.V.).

Made as God has made us, 'we live not by bread alone.' In a far deeper sense, we live on—words. Words are the vehicles of our thoughts. They are the outlet for our ideas. Words are charged with a

strange power. They can bless and heal. They can blister or cut like a knife. Nations, as well as individuals, live *on* them and *by* them. For years, France lived on a word, 'Security.' For years Germany lived on a word, 'Equality'—a word it appears they have now changed and degraded to 'Brutality.' America, after the slump, lived on 'Recovery.' To-day, Britain is living less on her food supply than on a word, 'Liberty.' 'Take with you words,' says Hosea, the Old Testament prophet. Let us envisage what might happen in our individual lives, if we went about carrying—words.

A ministerial friend of mine in Edinburgh was travelling lately by an early morning tram. He saw a working man in front of him, in a shy, almost surreptitious way, take from his pocket a printed card. Curiosity made my friend peep over the man's shoulder and read: 'To-day, God's Love is protecting me, God's Wisdom is directing me, God's Power is controlling me.' Here was a man, going forth to meet the cares and irritations of the day, believing it was worth while to fortify himself with—words. There was a popular song we used to hear: 'One is nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth.' I sometimes think we Christians could adapt these lines and make them read: 'One is nearer God's heart in the morning than any time else in the day.' 'Hast thou commanded the morning?' runs a suggestive text in the Book of Job. The children in Goldsmith's immortal poem could forecast what was in store for them by their first glance at their schoolmaster as he entered the room.

> Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
> The day's disasters in his morning face.

Full well, also, can we older children anticipate the day when the battle is sure to go against us. On the other hand, there are mornings which are the prelude to a strange peacefulness and to a deep sense of adequacy to all that the day may demand. A few moments given to God, a word of Christ, left to fertilize in secret within us, can give us a new outlook on all and everything we meet. 'I am among you as he that serveth.' Such a word would open up to us avenues of blessing. Christ's idea of success is the number of people we serve. Get the holy habit wrought into your life of having some big delivering word or idea to propel you through the day. 'Take with you words.' They will warm you, guide you, bless you and make you a blessing.

Again, 'take with you words and *plant them in other hearts*.' The story is told of Robert Browning that, near the close of his life, he was receiving an honorary degree. The students cheered him as only students can. A distinguished graduand, sitting beside the poet, said to him, when the noise subsided: 'I suppose this kind of thing is a matter of indifference to you.' 'On the contrary,' said Browning. 'I have been waiting for it for twenty years.' At long last, after toil and obscurity and disparagement, the hard-won recognition had arrived.

There are people besides poets 'waiting on a word.' We have known husbands so contemptuous of what they were pleased to term 'slushy sentiment' that they would die rather than be guilty of an endearment. There are places of business so charged with the nagging spirit that the head of a department would give his subordinates the shock of their lives by one spontaneous word of encouragement. There are 'pillars of the church' whose influence would be multiplied tenfold if their strength of character could be adorned with the lilywork of courtesy. The world could move along without some big charities, if more people would part with their small coin, like 'Please' and 'Thank you' and 'After you.' Or conceive the miracle we can work with a postage stamp. A few words of timely sympathy sent to one facing an operation or suffering a bereavement—how much these can mean to a heart humble and sensitive! Or, to speak of a gesture even more Christian because less common, how much pleasure one can give by a few words of congratulation. But let it be confessed that it takes a bigger man to rejoice with those who rejoice than to weep with those who weep. Suffering disarms and melts us. Success is a sore temptation to envy. 'Jealousy,' says Dean Inge, 'is the vice most deeply rooted in the human heart.' Even for our own sake, then, let us hasten to offer the word of congratulation. Some day you may even attain the shining tableland of those who can say, out of hearts cleansed for ever from the foul growth of jealousy—

> I love a thing that's fine
> Although it be not mine;
> Yea, though it never mine may be,
> Still it delights and comforts me.

Take with you words, then—words of heartening—everywhere. This war-stricken world is full of people, nervous, overdriven, anxious, depressed. Whatever other Government departments are closed to those who would serve their country, there are always vacancies in the Ministry of

Encouragement. Take such words with you and cast them, with royal hand, into other lives.

> See how the ringing ripples spread
> Wider and wider evermore.
> God knows what word, at random said,
> Shall reach, at last, the eternal shore.

Any one who cares to look up the reference will find that, when completed, the verse reads: 'Take with you words and turn to the Lord.'

In these days of war, many of us have been taking words to God—querulous words, words bordering on rebellion, impatient words, words of indignation that He should see our plight and stand aloof. What would happen if, against the dark background of war, we should set the shining mercies of the pre-war days, if we switched over from a dirge to a song, from the whining tone to the note of gratitude? Even if it cost a supreme effort of the will, would it not accomplish a great work of cleansing in our hearts? How good it would be for ourselves, *and what a change it would be for God*, if we entered His Presence, not with our habitual list of self-centred complainings, but harping for once on another string and surprising Him with a song of gratitude! Take a turn up and down in your own soul's history. Revisit the place, known only to God and yourself, where you vowed yourself to Christian discipleship. Go farther back and think of the bias a Christian home gave your life towards goodness and towards God. See Him shaping you by that friendship, inspiring you by that book, purifying you by that illness, bringing into your life the love of wife and children, guiding you into many an opportunity for goodly service. See all this, and take with you words of gratitude to the God who understands, the God who overrules, the God who undertakes.

Perhaps our gratitude to God, kindled to a pure flame by such a retrospect, may be summed up in one all-embracing thought. It is the blessedness of knowing that, by His grace, in peace or war, in prosperity or adversity, amid the many lights that have gone out of our life, one never has and never will.

In an anthology of modern poetry, there is a most arresting poem. It is addressed by a friend to another friend, to allay a strange fear. The latter, whose ruling passion was the love of his native land, had confided to the writer that he had a morbid anxiety lest he should be buried before it was absolutely certain that he was dead—a not uncommon fear. In the poem, the writer reassures him. 'When your body is lying in the quiet, cold room, I shall enter alone, and whisper one word in your ear—"England." If you make neither sign nor motion at that word, I shall know beyond a shadow of doubt that you are dead.'

There is another word, far more intimate, another Name which is, for most of us, the last touchstone of our souls. When that Name no longer rallies us like a trumpet call, it will mean the death of all that makes life worth living. It is our supreme blessedness, and the source of every word of gratitude we take to God, that He has never suffered us to fall out of these strong hands, and that we can still say from the heart: 'We are persuaded that neither death nor life shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.'[1]

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Peace of Christ.

BY THE REVEREND JOHN HOWAT, B.D., BALLATER.

'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you.'—Jn 14^{27}.

Our generation has lived through the greatest experiment in peace-making in history. For all the high hopes that were centred on it, it ended in failure. It was perhaps too readily assumed that peace could be secured among the nations by laws and compacts; and now we have learned that laws and compacts are valueless unless they are founded on justice and truth. Peace of a kind we may have had; now we realize what a sham it was. Any one now looking back and piercing below the surface of events is forced to acknowledge that the war did not really begin with the outbreak of hostilities in September 1939, but that the war was going on all the time. Peace did not suddenly come to an end and war begin; there was no lightning rupture in the course that events were taking. There was only an intensification of the forces that were at work, a change of weapons, the battle of words that had been growing more and more bitter with the years becoming the battle of armaments.

When we turn our attention to another kind of peace, the peace we all yearn for and seek after in our own individual lives, we should be able to learn something from all the mistakes, confusions, and disappointments that have surrounded this experiment in the international sphere. We all long for tranquillity, to be able to face every issue of life calmly and serenely. Our days and nights can become one long tragedy when we are a prey to worries and cares. How can we get above them?

[1] G. J. Jeffrey, *Christian Intimacies*, 20.

How can we become masters of the situation, so that our whole life is controlled and purposive and secure? How can we attain to that inner peace of mind and spirit in which we know that we are not at the mercy of events, something more than driftwood thrown up by the tide upon the beach of time?

Lord Tennyson made the Lotus-Eaters sing:

> What pleasure can we have
> To war with evil? Is there any peace
> In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
> All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
> In silence; ripen, fall and cease:
> Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

We have all felt like that; that is certainly an authentic cry for peace that every soul at some time or other comes very near to uttering. But we all know that it is not the cry of our finest moments, that peace of that kind is the peace of surrender. It is the peace, not of the victorious soldier but of the man who has given up the struggle, found it too much for him and laid down his arms. That, we may suppose, is the peace that has descended upon France to-day, the peace that comes to a land that has lost its soul. And, as France is already beginning to learn, the peace of a lost soul is no peace at all. When ideals are forgotten, and the noble vision vanishes, when principles are besmirched, has not such peace been bought at too great a price? We can all have peace by denying the best that is in us, by silencing the voice of conscience, by forgetting higher things; but sooner or later we find it is the peace of slavery.

Another peace that we often find attractive is the peace of the anchorite. Finding the struggle to keep his soul pure and untarnished an impossible one, he deliberately shuts himself off from the conflict of the world, creates for himself an unnatural environment where, unhampered by the temptations of the world, he endeavours to put into practice the principles of his faith. This imperfect world does not make the practice of the Christian life easy. We are constantly harassed and forced into situations not of our making, where it is almost impossible to remain true to our faith. We cannot keep ourselves unspotted from the world. That is the attraction of Isolationism; but here again our hopes are disappointed. It may bring us peace for a while, but only by our refusing to face realities or to make difficult choices. For good or ill we are in this world and part of it; and to try to evade its challenge is to live a stunted existence. There is at the moment a growing and a healthy contempt for the Isolationists. What right have they to live at ease, enjoying the blessings of civilization and doing nothing to defend them? That judgment applies to each of us in our personal warfare. We do not overcome the world by turning our backs on it.

There is also the peace bought by appeasement. How hollow that can be there is no need to emphasize. If we make peace our chief aim in life, if we set out to win peace at any price, and think of it as something to be achieved, however dishonourable the cost to ourselves and others, then we discover very soon that we are on the swift downward descent that does not bring us peace at all but only makes plain the futility of our efforts. By setting little store on moral distinctions we may gain temporary relief, but every time our trafficking with evil demands an increasing price from us. The man who tries to make honourable terms with the devil finds ere long that the devil has won.

Lastly there is the peace of Christ, so different from all these, of which He could speak in the Upper Room, and which was His even on the Cross. He did not capitulate before the forces of evil gathered against Him; nor did He attempt to evade them or to compromise with them. He went out boldly to face them, to challenge them and destroy them; and throughout that grim struggle we see Him calmly confident, knowing the only perfect peace there is.

That is the peace He would give us, the peace the soldier knows when the fury of the battle is raging all about him, when every fibre of his being is called into strenuous action, when he has forgotten himself, his fears and prospects, because he is lost in the task before him. In such a moment there is no time for worry and dread; there is no thought even for the issue of the fight. All he knows is the thing he must do. With every ounce of his energy concentrated on that, without a care for honour or wounds or death even, he is thoroughly absorbed in this one thing. For him there is no quandary, no helpless uncertainty; he is in complete command of the situation, because he is in the grip of something greater than himself.

Such is the peace of Christ. We cannot hope to win it or create it for ourselves. No lowering of the flag of conscience, no stunting of our manhood in a hopeless endeavour to escape from a cruel environment, no meek resignation to the blows of fortune will ever bring us such serenity, such confidence, such quiet of soul. That peace can only be found at the feet of Christ, when we have ceased to live for ourselves and our own hopes, and are living for Christ

only and His will. When we no longer live in ourselves and our own strength, but in Him and the power of His Spirit, then at last we are secure.

That is the difference between the peace of Christ and all its counterfeits. His peace is not a patched-up armistice, a temporary lull in the hostilities; it is not the comparative calm of a dug-out, where we can snatch a moment's respite while the fury lasts. Christ takes us right into the heart of it, there to know the meaning of His peace.

So much of our worry and failure is due to an inner disharmony of soul. Christ has not been made the passion of our lives, with the result that we are confronted at every turn by our own uncertainty, our own incapacity, our own ignorance, and from these the tranquil mind can never blossom. But when our whole life has become centred in Him, when it has ceased to be, even in the noblest sense, self-centred, then we know the peace which the world cannot give. A mind at perpetual war with itself means misery and tears. Its energies are dissipated, and when the enemy is at the gates civil strife is madness. But when Christ is given command the inner conflict is over, all our energies are concentrated in His service, and with His peace in our hearts we go forward in splendid disciplined action to do His bidding.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Strength of the Hills.

'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.'—Ps 121[1].

What does this old singer mean by associating help with the hills? Well, first of all, the words are obviously a figure of speech, and yet they are more than that. Their author had probably lived among the hills, and had come to realize the indefinable appeal of his surroundings. It is hard enough to describe, but the fact remains that of all the appeals of the natural world to the heart of man the hills and the sea easily take the largest place. A man who had never lived among the hills would never have thought of associating the hills with help. It was because he loved his native hills and was steeped in their wonder and mystery that he could speak of lifting his eyes to their heights to find help in his life's struggle. The hills are associated in his mind with those great thoughts and ideals and visions which stand to our common thinking in the same relation as the mountain to the plain below. It was to these he turned for help in his hour of need.

If we look into this thought deeply and sincerely we shall find in it an answer to a problem which besets our whole life and comes to a climax in our religion. The problem is concerned with the question of help. What help may we expect in the struggle of the higher part of our nature to gain ascendency over the lower? That problem is always with us. We come to it in our own personal experience if we are honest in our dealings with ourselves. The most baffling of all questions in life is the strange weakness we find in our attempt to carry out the things we know to be right and good. The bewildering disparity between vision and achievement is obvious in the lives of all men. It is the most humiliating feature in life. It introduces an element of doubt and uncertainty into all our high ventures, and with the great majority of mankind it leads to the habit of self-deception and surface living. The same is true of the world at large, which, after all, is but a magnified man. The things the world wants it sacrifices. It wants peace, it has wanted it for centuries, and yet it finds itself bound to the iron wheels of war. It wants a finer relationship between men, but it seems fixed to the old ways. Things come to such a pass that the practical man as contrasted with the idealist is the man who accepts what is, without any hope or resolve to greatly alter things.

This is the moral impasse into which the life of mankind comes, and it is held there as in a prison. Progress, of course, is made, but it is slow and halting. The whole need of man seems to utter itself in a cry for help. That is the human situation, and the first thing for us to do is to recognize the problem. Start with your own life; is not that the greatest problem of all? How much of our lives represents what we really love? How many times a day do we find ourselves thinking and acting along lines which we hate? That is the problem of human nature. There is war inside us—we struggle with a divided self.

Now religion meets this problem in its own way. We are told, for example, that the religion of Christ is a dynamic—a source of power. It raises the soul to new levels of activity. It turns moral weakness into moral strength. Further, it is usual to hear the distinction drawn between the function of religion as a body of teaching and its function as a bestower of power. Christ, the Teacher, is placed in the background as though the teaching of Christianity were dry bones without life. Christ, the Saviour, is placed in the forefront as it is not what Jesus told us which matters supremely but what He did for us.

Let us bring this matter to the test of reality. How many find anything vital or real in the distinc-

tion between Christ as a Teacher and Christ as a Saviour? Or how many recognize the validity of separating between what Christ gives us to do and what He does for us? Nothing in His own words justifies such a distinction. We find Him saying that power comes through obedience—'If any man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.' The meaning of such words cannot be mistaken. It is obedience to Christ the Teacher which brings the experience of Christ as the indwelling Spirit and power. When Christ's truth is truth for us, Christ's presence is power in us. And the whole reason for our weakness is that we do not really believe with our hearts what Christ taught. We set it far from us, we reconcile ourselves to the idea that it is beyond our reach, and no truth treated in that way can bring power in its train.

Let us return to the text. It is from the hills that strength comes, from those thoughts and truths and revelations in Christ which are like spiritual mountains before our eyes. We must lift our eyes there if we want to find strength, but it must be no mere lifting of the eyes as though a chance look could by some magic bring new power. It must be a constant and persistent looking. Here we would strike a positive note which is needed by the men and women of to-day. In the conflict of forces within ourselves, that force wins which commands our real love and devotion. Sometimes our freedom to choose what course we will adopt is presented as though our wills, being free, can decide the question in a calm and detached atmosphere. That is a barren generalization. It is not true to life. In real life the will follows the heart. What we love we choose, and if sometimes we say that we hate what we do, all it means is that for the moment a lower love has proved the stronger. The only way to strengthen the will is not to force ourselves to do what is unpleasant, but to feed the desires which are set towards the right. Remember Sir John Seeley's great words in *Ecce Homo*: 'No heart is pure that is not passionate; no virtue is safe that is not enthusiastic,' and as Seeley points out later the Christian moral reformation of the world consisted in this, that Christ lifted morality from the position of a restraint into a motive, or, in other words, that He turned the attention of men from the will to the heart. This truth is conveyed in another form by a later book called *The Rational Education of the Will*, by Dr. Paul Lévy, where the author says this: 'Ideal and will are two inseparable terms. Is not every age of feeble will an age of the absence or decay of Ideals?' That sentence is a golden one, it illumines things. An age of feeble will is always an age in which ideals are either absent or decaying.

It is vision of the big things which keeps us on the straight road in everyday life. If the heart is cold in the presence of great ideals the will is impotent. Men and women turn in this direction and in that because they have no great object in their lives. For some time past that has been counteracted by the war, which has given all of us something outside ourselves to live for, some work in which we have all been able to find our little share. But the critical time, the great test, is upon us. The war has stimulated a great many, but stimulation is not regeneration. The war's permanent lessons will only remain with those who either before or during these years have been led to some great personal ideal. It is there we must look for help in the years to come. Some of us have seen the hills clearly for the first time, the beauty and power of comradeship and sacrifice. Let us not forget that is where our help lies. But some of us have been taken further still. The tragedy of the war has led us to see more vividly the alternative of a world without Christ, and so our hearts have been led to a new kind of devotion. That is the spring of the Christian faith. It lies in the personal love of Christ and all that He stood for. Christianity is that love shed abroad in thousands of hearts scattered over the face of the world, drawing all men together in new bonds of fellowship. Apart from personal devotion all the organization of Christianity is a dead thing. Its future depends upon a vital faith. That is the hill from whence our help comes. And so this old song has a great and vital message for to-day.[1]

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Debt of the Forgiven.

BY THE REVEREND STEWART MECHIE, M.A., EDINBURGH.

'And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?'—Lk 7^{42}.

Two penniless debtors are not an infrequent occurrence in civilized society; but the same cannot be said of the other party in this brief parable. A moneylender who cancels debts both large and small without any compensating consideration, a moneylender who can expect his debtors to love him; where upon earth shall we look for him? Clearly we are here in the region of parable. This is a story of human life, yet a story

[1] S. M. Berry, *The Crucible of Experience*, 178.

with some features so improbable that it points directly to another sphere. It can only be the relations between God and man that are shadowed forth in such a tale.

1. *Man in God's sight is bankrupt: 'they had nothing to pay.'* Many debts and no assets: that is the human predicament over against God. It is the predicament not of some men but of all. 'For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' Face to face with God man is without excuse. Great or small, learned or unlearned, in that Holy Presence he is beaten to his knees. The symbol of human life, even the best, is a minus sign, the symbol of debt. Moreover, this is a situation that cannot, on its own level, be retrieved. A perfect obedience to God's demands from this day forward, supposing that were a possibility for me, would not avail to cancel out the failures of the past and the wasted opportunities that will not come my way again. Here indeed is a knot requiring a god to unravel it, for no man can. Man face to face with God is bankrupt, with nothing to pay.

2. *God freely forgives and cancels the debt: 'he frankly forgave them both.'* God has indeed unravelled the knot: He has sent One to turn our debits into credits. What could not be done on the level of human life has been done through the descent of power from on high incarnate in the Son of God from heaven. That is the gospel. It was for this Christ came—to turn man's minus into a plus and through His credit to make His people creditable. The minus sign so cancelled, you will notice, forms a cross, yes, a Cross, the symbol of Love Divine and of the cost of Divine forgiveness. That means that you and I and every sinner by the grace of our Redeeming God may start afresh with the black marks blotted out and our books cleared—and that not as a theological fiction but as an actual experience of glorious renewal and hope. Here is good news for some who have soiled themselves in the follies of youth and for some who have destroyed themselves in the cynicisms of age. Here is good news for mankind sinners in their bankruptcy. Their Creditor has cancelled the debt, and for nothing.

3. *How shall such news be received? 'which of them will love him most?'* On another occasion Jesus told a parable of a debtor who had been forgiven by his master a very large debt and then refused to cancel the trifling sum owed him by a fellow-servant. From which it would appear that a great forgiveness does not always issue in much love. Taking the two parables together we see that it is not simply the fact of having had many sins forgiven that inspires much love: it is rather the realization of the fact. Only if the debtor realizes that he is bankrupt and has no hope, and only if he realizes that he has done nothing to deserve the free gift that his creditor makes, only then is he inspired with much love. Further, the two parables together suggest that the love that is so inspired is all of a piece. It will find expression, according as it has opportunity, either toward God or toward man. Whether it is the Creditor Himself or the fellow-servant that is in question, the love that flows from forgiveness will make no distinction, but will go its own grateful, comprehensive, joyful yet sacrificial way.

Human experience in the most intimate relations of life confirms these conclusions. Is it not true that love becomes more intense, more pure, more ready for sacrifice the more the sense of having been wondrously forgiven enters into it? That is true, for example, of the love of parents for their children. Too often there is a self-regarding and possessive taint in that love which may work deadly havoc; and the best antidote to that poisonous element is just the sense on the parents' part that they are unworthy to have such a trust and yet that God has forgiven them and has committed it to them. Was it not Margaret Fuller, the New England authoress, who wrote when she became a mother? 'I am the parent of an immortal being: God be merciful to me a sinner.' When that element is present even mother-love becomes a greater thing. It is this feeling of humility, this deep sense of trust in spite of failure, that is the creative thing in forgiveness. Without that sense parents are likely to fall short in the purity or sacrificial quality of their love for their children.

The same may be traced in wider spheres than the family. Would it not be true to say that, with all the deepening of the social conscience and the urge toward social service that the present generation has seen, there is largely lacking among us a type of Christ-inspired service that was notable in past generations, a type of which we may take David Livingstone or James Chalmers as examples, a service to the uttermost with the world well lost? May it not be that that type of service for men and the love which inspires it spring only from the sense of a great Divine forgiveness—not from a sense of the soundness of Christian principles or even from devotion to Christ as the Captain of the hosts of righteousness, but only from the personal consciousness of indebtedness to Christ, the sense of having been much forgiven? Surely a Divine

gift so free and so wonderful must issue in a love the more intense the more the wonder of forgiveness is realized.

4. *What is the debt of the forgiven?* The answer has been already suggested in what has been said about the distinctive quality and range of Christian service that is seen in the man who owns that he has been much forgiven. To speak of it still in terms of debt one would be compelled to say that the debt of the forgiven can never be reckoned. It is an indebtedness to God in Christ and therefore to all God's children for His sake that is vast beyond measure. 'Owe no man anything, but to love one another,' says St. Paul. 'The debt of charity,' says Origen, 'is permanent, and we are never quit of it; for we must pay it daily and yet always owe it.' Nevertheless, strictly speaking, the language of an external relation like creditor and debtor is inappropriate here. The great glory of the Divine act of forgiveness is that it raises the situation between God and man to an altogether higher, more intimate and more gracious level. Cancelled debt is a potent metaphor, yet an inadequate one, for the effect of the mighty acts of the Lord for man's salvation. Moneylenders do not frankly forgive debtors great or small; but God does, for He is no moneylender, but the God of all grace who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus. Thus the debt of the forgiven is infinite:

> Love so amazing, so divine,
> Demands my soul, my life, my all.

But if it be Love that demands, it is a debt which the debtor loves to pay: and a debt love loves to pay is no longer debt.

The Immutability of God.

By the Reverend A. Gordon James, Preston, Lancashire.

The scholastic doctrine of Divine Immutability, with its acknowledged debt to Greek philosophy, having survived many theological storms, would appear once again to be in jeopardy. This is not altogether surprising, for apocalyptic and changelessness are uncomfortable bedfellows; and this is an apocalyptic hour. The plain man feels that to-day he has no rock of ages to which he can cling. The scientist coolly contemplates the universe running down like a clock. The philosopher is groping for the absolute in a phantasmagoria of whirling events. The theologian, beset behind and before, is hard pressed to justify the doctrine of a God who is both immanent in a world of suffering and yet rich in a transcendent holiness that is untouched by sorrow. Change and decay in all around we see; and the vision of Him who changes not has grown dim.

Once upon a time (the phraseology of the fairy tale is not inappropriate, so remote does this period seem) it was possible to argue from the mutability of man to the immutability of God. The relative implies the absolute; the changing, the changeless; the temporal, the eternal. So the argument ran. It does not run with the same ease to-day. Einstein has deified the relative and the absolute has been driven into exile. Life is seen to be dynamic, never static; and changelessness is equated with non-life. The modern conception of space-time has altered the relationship between time and eternity. The second law of thermodynamics has so modified our conception of the universe that what lies beyond the universe is without form and void. It is still true that the unchanging God is necessary as an object of pure thought if human reason is to have validity; but in the world of pure thought the air is too attenuated for most of us to breathe freely. Hence the prevailing and highly dangerous appeal to experience.

For this change of outlook psychology must bear its share of the blame, if blame it be. The psychologists have caused us to catch our breath when we utter the prayer—

> 'O Thou who changest not, abide with me.'

May not He who changes not be a projection of the human mind? May not our prayer be a form of defence mechanism or a way of escape? Or, if He who changes not has any real existence outside the world of ideas, how can He make contact with men and women enduring suffering more intense and more widespread than history has ever known?

This problem of the relation of an immutable God to human suffering was Baron von Hügel's dilemma; and he endeavoured to meet it by the traditional method of having recourse to the Two Natures doctrine of the Person of Christ. The divine Christ was *ex-hypothesi* capable of joy, but not of sorrow, for in the richness of the divine nature, sorrow can have no place. The human Christ, by reason of His perfect identification with humanity bore our afflictions and shared our sufferings. Hence the divine-human Christ was able to mediate to mankind the sympathy, though not the suffering of God. No one has argued this more persuasively and with more human insight than von Hügel; but one feels that had he been rather more of a scientist and rather less of a scholastic his conclusions would have been different. For the scientific outlook is bound to modify the opinions even of the most orthodox theologian, and not always with any serious theological loss. The scientifically minded theologian can only conceive of immutability in the sense of dynamic perfection, in which there is room for movement, interplay, activity, and creative effort. He may agree with von Hügel that in the inner being of God there can be no limitation such as is implied by suffering; but he cannot postulate changelessness without some modification of the ideas which the word ordinarily connotes. Not only has he no experience of life without change, but he has no means of supposing that changelessness is possible, even to God. And lacking both the ability to define life without movement and the power to conceive of God apart from life, he is compelled to admit the possibility of a God having knowledge and therefore experience of evil, though evil, as we know it, may not be evil to God.

The truth is we are bound to acknowledge on the one hand the irrefutable logic of the doctrine of divine immutability, and on the other, the creative activity of God as He reveals Himself in a mutable world. It is the reconciliation of these apparently conflicting truths which is so difficult. It is well that it should be difficult, for a simple and obvious solution would do less than justice to the facts. We have more to fear from over simplification than from making theology difficult. Between the world of thought and the world of action there must always be tension, though there need not be friction. God absolute and God revealed are not two Gods, but one. God transcendent and God immanent are not two Gods, but one; nor can we sharply distinguish between the glory of the transcendent and the humility of the immanent. Yet the resolution of the transcendent and the immanent in one simple formula is, and perhaps always will be, beyond the power of human thought. 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways, saith the Lord.'

Moreover, so difficult is it to act reasonably in an age of unreason or to think clearly in the midst of a world conflagration which we are powerless to control that we are in danger of allowing our emotions to get the better of us. We are frightened by the coolness of the scholastic doctrine of a God who would appear to be neither for us nor against us. He may wish us well and sympathize deeply with our misfortunes; but in His essential nature He remains severely neutral. The scholastic doctrine does not admit that God is apathetic to human suffering, for 'His nature and His name is love.' But if the trials and misfortunes of His children have no power to stir the unfathomable pool of His eternal serenity can the love of God have any convincing value for men and women?

The solution of this problem though difficult is not impossible and is best attempted by a careful regard for the meaning of words. We dare not contemplate the mystery of the divine nature without thinking of God as the pure fount of joy, holiness, and love; a joy which sorrow cannot mar, a holiness which evil cannot penetrate, and a love which not all human sin can deflect from its redeeming purpose. To suggest that a God who sees the end in the beginning can in any sense be limited in a temporal universe is to destroy our trust in the eternal, either partially or wholly. For if human events have the power to limit God they may defeat Him; and to believe in a defeated God is impossible. We dare not close the book of history at Calvary; to do that would be to invalidate Christianity altogether. If this seems to detract from the value of the Incarnation we may perhaps take refuge in the distinction which the early Fathers made between the eternal Logos and the Logos incarnate. The eternal Logos could not suffer limitation; the incarnate Logos only suffered limitation in so far as He gathered manhood unto Himself; and such limitation was self-imposed and for a brief space of human time.

We must therefore define immutability, as applied to God, as a state of being which is not subject to limitation. Again, in ascribing changelessness to God we must not thereby assume lack of movement. The sea is ever changing because it is ever moving; but within its own order the sea is changeless, in the sense that it remains the sea whatever form it may assume at the moment. The illustration is

far from perfect, as any physical illustration must be when applied to God. But it may serve to show that the concept of immutability does not necessarily exclude movement, and we must make room therefore in our definition for an interplay of spiritual forces within the divine nature which defeats the idea of stagnation. There remains one other consideration. To what extent can we ascribe suffering to God? To say with von Hügel that God sympathizes but does not suffer hardly seems adequate; for can there be any real sympathy without suffering if suffering exists in the world at all? No dialectic, no matter how skilful, can avoid this difficulty. But what is suffering? On the human plane, it is a physical condition occasioned by nervous action, and a mental state prompted by physical stimuli. If the mind of man were separated from its physical concomitants would man suffer? Possibly not, but if it be argued that mental suffering is conceivable without any physical stimulus, then such suffering would be mitigated by a perfect knowledge of a purpose which on its fulfilment excluded suffering altogether. 'For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame.' The mental state of our Lord in His incarnate life was necessarily affected by His bodily state and also by His limited knowledge. God has no bodily parts, and is not limited in the perfection of His knowledge. If He suffers with His children it cannot be suffering as we understand it. Therefore we cannot ascribe suffering to God, unless we give to suffering a meaning which it does not bear when used of man; nor can we rightly use the word sympathy, since sympathy is meaningless except when brought into contact with suffering as we understand it. We may say then that the immutability of God excludes suffering, except in so far as suffering is transcended by perfect knowledge and absolute wisdom.

It is necessary therefore to maintain at all costs the doctrine of divine immutability, even though it may appear to conflict with what we call common sense. We must not be stampeded by the appalling tragedies of our time into weak, sentimental, and irrational views of the divine glory. Unless He exists in changeless and eternal majesty and power He cannot redeem us from all evil. God triumphs over human sin, sorrow, and evil, because He is God, immutable, changeless, eternal. We must therefore ever pray (and not faint) to Him who is above all, in all, and through all,

'O Thou who changest not, abide with me.'

Contributions and Comments.

On the Significance of ἡ γραφὴ in 1 Timothy v. 18.

This verse, which reads, 'For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his hire,' has frequently been cited as evidence of the late date of the Pastoral Epistles on the ground that 'The labourer is worthy of his hire' (Mt 10^{10}, Lk 10^{7}) is quoted as sharing the scriptural authority of Dt 25^{4}, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn,' thus pointing to a post-Pauline date when the Gospels had come to be regarded as scripture. But it appears to have escaped the notice of those who use this argument that the passage in question comes from Q which may well have been circulating with scriptural authority during the lifetime of St. Paul. Compare the suggestion of Bussmann that when St. Paul says that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures; and that He was raised on the third day according to the scriptures (1 Co $15^{3.4}$), he implies the existence of a written Passion and Resurrection story and is not referring to Old Testament passages which might be regarded as prophetic of the Passion and the Resurrection. (Cf. V. Taylor, *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* [2], 48–50.)

J. S. MacArthur.

The College, Millport, Isle of Cumbrae.

Entre Nous.

'The Expository Times,' 1941–1942.

We should like to draw attention to some new and interesting features to appear during the year. Considerable space will be devoted to *Problems of Reconstruction*. Among the subjects will be *Man and Nature*—reverence for Nature, the use of the land; *The Profit Motive and Public Ownership*; *The Church's Concern for Education*; *Worship*—fundamental—but how to be intelligibly integrated with all life; *Woman's Place in Democracy*.

Besides this series there will be articles by the Rev. J. H. Hudson on *The Aramaic Basis of the Gospels*. Another short series will deal with *The Conduct of Public Worship*. Different points of view will be given, especially with regard to liturgical forms.

Another subject will be *Is it possible to write a Life of Christ?* This question will be submitted to several authors.

The Function of a Chair of Theology.

Owing to the generosity of Dr. Edward Cadbury a Chair of Theology has been founded in Birmingham University, and Dr. H. G. Wood, well-known to the readers of this magazine, has been appointed as the first Professor of Theology. He delivered his Inaugural Lecture in the end of last October. It has been printed at the Press of the Birmingham Printers, and copies may be obtained from Dr. Wood.

The whole Lecture is of interest. We quote from the last two paragraphs.

'The function of a Chair of Theology in a modern university is not confined to the development of a degree course primarily designed for those who wish to specialize in this field of study. Two other aspects of the work of such a Chair are almost equally important. The point at which I should be most inclined to differ from J. H. Newman's *Idea of a University* is his inclination to separate teaching from research, and to regard teaching as the one function of a university while assigning research to other bodies such as the Royal Society. I have learned from my revered teacher, Rendel Harris, to distrust any divorce between teaching and research. Effective teaching needs to be enlivened by research, and should convey to the student something of the joy of the scholar and the scientist in discovery, and some sense of the much land yet to be explored and possessed. . . . To stimulate further research will be an essential feature of the work of this Chair.

'At the same time, theology should be and actually is an interest of a wider circle of students than those who read for a degree. . . . More particularly, the Theological Department should further the equipment of teachers for making Scripture teaching in both our secondary and elementary schools vital and effective. And here I would add that I attach a growing importance to the extra-mural side of university education, to the contribution to the formation of public opinion which a university can make through meeting the demands of adult students who seek knowledge, not for a degree or a diploma, but for its own sake and for the sake of becoming better men and women, better citizens. On this side I hope to make full use of the opportunities which this privileged position may afford me. A Chair of Theology in the University of Birmingham will discharge one of its highest functions if its holder can strengthen and deepen in the minds of the citizens of this great city those fundamental religious convictions which, though they interpreted them with varying emphasis and in differing ways, Joseph Priestley and John Henry Newman, R. W. Dale and Charles Gore agreed in regarding as vital to the greatness and welfare of our city.'

'One Foot in Heaven.'

One Foot in Heaven (Harrap; 8s. 6d. net) is the account of the life of William H. Spence, an American Methodist minister. It is told by his son, Hartzell Spence. Perhaps the best description of Mr. Spence is given in the paragraph, 'He was a salesman of God's word, and he sold it with all his might: by word and deed, by voice and appearance, by threats and cajolery, by fire and compassion. But he got it sold. And his converts stayed sold.' The story is told that twenty years after her confirmation as a girl of twelve a woman told Hartzell Spence, 'It is blasphemous to say it, but since your father put me through my catechism my religion has been the memory of your father. To this day I can't say where God begins and your father leaves off.'

Mr. Spence was studying for medicine and was in his last year at the University of Toronto when he went one night to a Methodist revival to hear Bishop Hartzell—Hartzell Spence was named after him. 'He was converted—as the Methodists understand conversion. The Lord personally placed a hand on his shoulder, and Father accepted the Call. Never once thereafter was he in doubt. He always knew that in the ministry he had found everything he would have experienced in medicine, and much, much more.' As there were no vacancies at the time in the Methodist Church in Canada he went to the States where he was quickly placed by the Iowa Bishop, his first charge being at Fort Dodge. But being a Methodist he had no continuing city and the Life contains accounts of many varieties of charges.

He was adroit when faced with practical difficulties—was he perhaps too adroit? 'If he wanted the official board to buy new carpeting for his study he never asked for it. He contrived for some steward to trip over an exposed surface.' But he was intrepid in all that he saw to be right. In one of his churches he suffered greatly from an anti-Negro group. The matter had partly died down when a celebrated Negro singer came to the town. Mr. Spence never missed the chance to hear a great musician practise, and when this singer tested the acoustics of the church auditorium, where the concert was to be held, he was there. 'After the practice Father walked forward and introduced himself.

'"I wish," he remarked, "that I had a voice like yours in my choir."

'"Thank you, sir," the singer said respectfully. "Perhaps you can help me. You see—my wife and I can't eat in the restaurant here, and we were turned away at the hotel. I wonder if you have a little room where we may rest until the recital."

'Father gasped.

'"You come right over to the house," he said. "We have a spare room. And, of course, you'll have dinner with us."

'The Negro and his wife remained overnight. By noon next day the anti-Negro group was organizing the parish again.'

The anti-Negro minority now decided to oust the minister from the church. How they charged him with heresy before the Bishop at the next Conference and how he dealt with the matter makes excellent reading. When he came back there was no sign of bitterness. He knew that 'he must forgive and forget and by example alone prove the opposition wrong.' The leader of the opposition had been Major Cooper. After Mr. Spence returned to the parish and at the end of his first service Major Cooper waited for him. '"Brother Spence," he said, "I'm a sinful old man, and horsewhipping would be good for me except that at my age it'd kill me. You're back, and I aim to co-operate. I decided while you were preaching. If I can't co-operate I'll keep quiet. You preached a good sermon."

'Father shook his head vigorously.

'"Brother Cooper," he counselled, "don't you dare keep quiet. The Lord needs a voice to say 'no' as often as He needs one to say 'yes.' I think He's relying on you for the loudest 'no' in this church. Life would be mighty dull, moreover, if I couldn't look forward to a good scrap with you now and then."

'They looked each other in the eyes for a long moment, their hands clasped.

'"Brother Spence," the major said, "Lord forgive me, I've misjudged you, even if you are a nigger-lover."

'"Negro, major," Father corrected, "Negro."

'The major scowled, freed his hand, and straightened his shoulders.

'"Negro it is, parson," he said, and bowed himself out of the door.'

Mr. Spence was faithful to the Methodist Discipline. He was strict about card playing and dancing, but in his last charges his views broadened. He adopted new methods also. He had taken part in a number of successful revival meetings, but he became convinced that revival appeals must be in keeping with the spirit of the nineteen-twenties and that the old-fashioned revival would not accomplish God's work on earth. '"Instead of bringing the sinners to the revival," Father said, "we are going to take the revival to them. On each card there is a name. I want you to go in twos and threes to each of these homes. Make an appointment in advance. Tell them you wish to talk to them about God's business. Make it a business call. Try to sell them the idea that they are missing the greatest thing in life in not professing and living Christianity. Try to get them out next Sunday to our church service. If they come, sit with them, and when the altar call is voiced you will know what to do." '

The book ends with an account of Hartzell Spence's last talk with his father.

'"Son," he said, "I am very happy over your promotion. I like to be proud of my sons. You are going far away. When you return I probably will not be here."

'He caught his breath.

'"But don't worry about me. We are both moving up to new jobs. You know that you are going to New York; and, just as surely, I know where I am going. You know what to expect when you get there; so, too, do I."'

No Secrets.

In her autobiography Mrs. Sarah Gertrude Millin gives an account of the first talk she had with General Smuts. It was at the time she was planning to write his Life. 'He tugged at the handles of a decrepit chest of drawers,' writes Mrs. Millin. 'Packets jumped as he crookedly jerked out the drawers—masses of packets of letters tied together with knotted bits of string.

'I asked who they were from.

'He answered:

'"I don't know. Everybody."

'"Over a long time?"

'"Oh yes, a long time."

'"What am I to do with them?"

'"Anything you wish."

'"Read them?"

'"Yes."

'"Use them?"

'"Yes."

'I asked if he had gone through the letters lately.

'He said no.

'"Don't you think," I suggested, "you ought to?"

'"Why?"

'"Perhaps there are some I shouldn't read or use."

'He said:

'"You should read or use whatever you find in this house. You should go into any room you like, and look into any cupboard or drawer you like, and do as you choose with whatever you find anywhere. You should ask any question you like. Everything is open to you. There are no secrets and no prohibitions and no instructions."'

In the Cellar.

Ezra has a good story in *The Methodist Recorder* (July 31, 1941). It was told to him the day before by the man concerned: 'He was looking through a book of pictures with his little boy when they came across a reproduction of Holman Hunt's *The Light of the World*. The boy asked what it meant, and he told him that it was a picture of Jesus doing as He said: "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him." He pointed out, too, that the door had no handle on the outside, which meant that if ever the door of the heart was opened to Jesus it would have to be from the inside.

'For a time the boy looked at the picture, and then he said: "Did He get in, Daddy?" "No," said his father, "I don't think He did." "Do you think they couldn't hear Him, Daddy?" he asked. "Yes, they heard," he replied, "but I don't think He got in at that door."

'He expected another question as to why he thought Jesus didn't get through that door, and was ready with his answer, but it didn't come. What did come was this: "But I'm sure, Daddy, they'd have let Him in if they'd known it was Jesus knocking. They couldn't have heard, and I know why. The siren had gone, and they were living in the cellar!" Which is, of course, just why many people do not hear His knock. Their life is on too low a level to hear Him. They are living in the cellar.'

The Prime Minister.

In the early days of the last war, and for some time previously, Mr. Churchill was, as we all remember, First Lord of the Admiralty, and among the many documents that came before him was an application from a youth for a commission in the Naval Reserve. For a time he had been a student at either Dartmouth or Osborne, but had been expelled for some misdemeanour. When the war broke out he sought to serve as he was equipped to do, but the first official who had to deal with his application turned it down after reading his record. From him the document passed to another official, and to another, on its upward way, and each in turn agreed with the first.

Finally, it reached the First Lord himself, who read the whole dossier through, and then added his own minute to the paper: 'I do not agree. The lad has had his punishment. Now give him his chance.' Only a big man was capable of so minuting.

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